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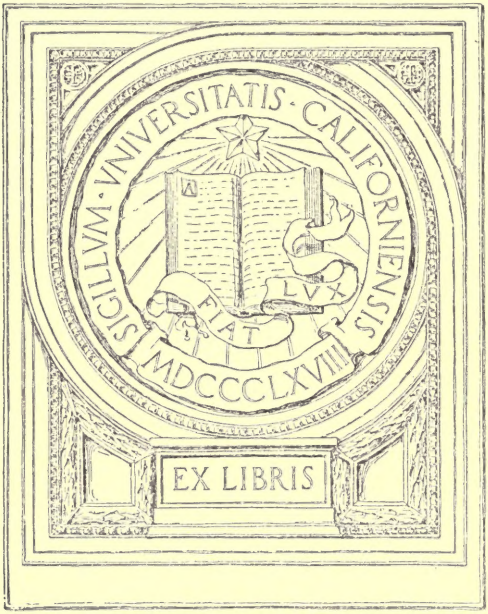

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TWELVE PRECISELY!

OR,

A NIGHT AT DOVER:

An Interlude,

IN ONE ACT.

AS

PERFORMED AT THE OLYMPIC THEATRE,

STRAND,

Monday, Jan. 1, 1821.

BY H. M MILNER,

Author of "Jew of Lubeck," "Barmecide," "Giovanni in Paris," &c. &c.

London:

PRINTED FOR JOHN LOWNDES, 25, BOW STREET, COVENT-GARDEN.

1821

Price One Shilling and Sixpence.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Sir Ferdinand Frisky ..... Mr. Rowbotham.
Brass ..... Mr. Vale.
Landlord ..... Mr. Mildenhall.

Amelia Wildlove ..... Mrs. W. S. Chatterley.
Katty O'Carrol ..... Mrs. W. S. Chatterley!
Marchioness de Grenouille .. Mrs. W. S. Chatterley!!
Captain Wildlove ..... Mrs. W. S. Chatterley!!!
Marquis de Grenouille .... Mrs. W. S. Chatterley!!!!
Peggy ..... Miss Healey.

Servants, Messrs. Downing, Buxton, &c.

EXPLANATION.

R. H. D. *Signifies Right Hand Door.*
L. H. D. ..... *Left Hand Door.*
M. D. ..... *Middle Door.*

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TWELVE PRECISELY;

&c.

SCENE.—*A Large Apartment, or Gallery, in an Inn, communicating by Three Doors in the Flat, with other Apartments.*

Enter the LANDLORD, *conducting* AMELIA *and* PEGGY.

LAND. This way, ma'am, this way; you shall have a most delightful apartment---overlooking the water, ma'am; and on a clear day, you may almost see Paris, ma'am, in the distance!

PEG. You seem able to stretch a pretty long distance beyond the mark, landlord.

AME. Which of the rooms is intended for me, pray?

LAND. (*Opening the door of* L. H. *room*) This is it, ma'am, and a most delightful, airy, pleasant room you'll find it.

AME. But cannot I be accommodated with the one next to it, for my servant? I am always accustomed to have her near me, and should not chose to be separated from her, in a strange place.

LAND. I'm sure, ma'am, I should be very happy to accommodate you in any thing; but most unfortunately, that room is occupied by a young gentleman just arrived from Paris.

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AME. How unlucky!

PEG. How provoking! Can't you get him out of it, and pop him into some other snug birth?---the creature surely wouldn't refuse to oblige my mistress.

LAND. If the lady pleases, I can convey a request from her.

AME. By no means: I must submit to the inconvenience. But---

LAND. The next room to that is very much at your ladyship's service, and there is a light closet runs at the back of the gentleman's room, which communicates with both of the others.

AME. Indeed! Oh, that will do vastly well; very well indeed:---I shall occupy this room, then; (*designating* L. H.) and you, Peggy, must have that; (*pointing to* R. H.) You will have the goodness (*to landlord*) to order your people to bring up our trunks, and place them in these apartments.

LAND. Certainly, my lady.

(*Exit landlord.*)

AME. Well, Peggy, here we are, as far as Dover, on our way to Paris! and the Fates, for the present, are adverse to our further progress. The wind blows so strongly against them, that the Calais Pacquets will not venture out till it changes.

PEG. I'm sure, ma'am, I think the best thing we can do, is to go back to London directly; and it would have been better still, if we had never left it. You, my lady, that might pick and chuse amongst the finest lords in the land, to be running all over the world after such a whimsical, unaccountable fellow as Sir Ferdinand Frisky.

AME. I am satisfied, Peggy, that I possessed the heart of Sir Ferdinand, and notwithstanding all his eccentricities, I think it is worth preserving. His strange departure for Paris, almost on the eve of our intended marriage, was one of those fantasies which stamp his character---perhaps meant as a trial of my constancy.---By following him to Paris, I shall not only shew him that my heart is with him, but may preserve him from a thousand follies, and prove to him, that I too, can act independently, and have my whims as well as himself.

PEG. And very proper indeed, that you should, ma'am! Oh! if I had a sweetheart that played me such tricks---I'd shew him as good as he gave, I'll warrant me.

(*During this dialogue, the servants of the inn have conveyed trunks and boxes into the* R. H. *and* L. H. *rooms.*)

AME. Let us proceed to inspect our apartments, and hope that after a good night's rest, we shall find the wind fair for Calais in the morning.

(*Exit into* L. H. *room.*)

PEG. It is an odd freak of my mistress's to follow her harum-scarum lover into France; but perhaps I may meet with one there, who may think it worth his while to follow me to England. I'll lead him a pretty dance!--I'm not like my mistress---I'm a match for all the fellows on this side of the water, or on the other either.

(*Peggy retires to the* R. H. *room. As she is going, enter* BRASS, *from Middle Room.*)

BRASS. Why no, it can't be; and yet I believe it was! ---can my eyes deceive me? or was that Peggy?---our Peggy?---Miss Amelia's Peggy?--my Peggy? What the devil can she be at here? What's she going to France too?---well there's more mad folks in the world besides me and my master, that's clear.

SIR F. *(Calls from the room.)* Brass!---here, Brass, I say!---what are you about there?

BRASS. I'm ruminating, sir--Well, who'd have thought that one of the first persons I should see would be Peggy?

Enter SIR F. *from Middle Door.*

SIR F. Ruminating, sir! what the devil do you mean by ruminating, when you ought to be in my room, sir?

BRASS. Oh, sir! such a discovery! such a marvellous event, sir! it quite confounds me, and upsets my understanding.

SIR F. You're a confounded impudent fellow, to prate to me about your discoveries; and I shall upset you, if you are not more attentive.

BRASS. What do you think, Sir?

SIR F. What do I think?---upon my soul, that's a polite question! Why, I think you are grown very impertinent.

BRASS. I saw her, sir:---I'm sure I saw her.

SIR F. Saw who? Who the devil did you see?

BRASS. Our Peggy, sir, as I'm a living sinner!

SIR F. Our Peggy!---and pray whom do you honor with that epithet? Who is the Peggy that claims equally both our services?

BRASS. I mean Miss Amelia's Peggy, sir.

SIR F. Amelia's Peggy!

BRASS. Yes, sir; and you may depend upon it, her mistress is not far off.

SIR F. Not far off!---Amelia at Dover!---Impossible! She's pining away in London, at my apparent desertion of her:---her heart's almost broken by this time, I'm sure.

BRASS. Ah, sir! it was a sad thing, this whim of your's---this trip to Paris, just when you should have tripped to church.

SIR F. Don't say a word, sir:---it was but fair, that before I committed my person to the monopoly of one woman, I should give the dear creatures on the other side of the water a chance; and, upon my soul, they were very grateful for it.

BRASS. Yes, sir, we didn't find 'em any ways particular.

SIR F. But the compassionate disposition of my nature soon brought me back. I pictured to myself the anguish that the poor creature would endure in my absence---it overcame my tender feelings; and I had no sooner enjoyed all the fun that I could meet with in Paris, than I determined to come straight back again to London, to see how she consoled herself.

BRASS. Aye; it would have served you right, sir, if she had listened to the addresses of some one else.

SIR F. Suggest such an idea again, scoundrel! and it is the last time that thou shalt address a human creature.

(*A chord or two from a piano-forte are heard from* L. H. *door.*)

BARSS. Hark, sir!---perhaps some one will sing.

AMELIA *Sings, within.*

The hand that rear'd the tender rose,
Its blooming beauty cherished;
But quitting then the fav'rite task,
The hapless flow'ret perished.

So woman's heart, whilst fondly loved,
In youth and gladness blooming,
Is wither'd, when its joy's removed,
By inward care consuming.

SIR F. By Heaven! 'tis she herself. Through all the world I should know it!---'tis Amelia's voice.

BRASS. I told you so, sir.

SIR F. Amelia here, at Dover! How perplexing! What can she be doing here?---

BRASS. Oh!---I shouldn't wonder if she's married, sir, and is singing to amuse her husband.

SIR F. Hold thy croaking, thou bird of ill omen! Married!---is it possible?---But she may be playing some trick---Women are not to be trusted; that has always been my motto.---I'll know what she's about---I'll see her.---Oh, if she is on any amorous expedition, I'll plague her---(*Amelia and Peggy peep out from* R. H. *door.*)---I'll stick to her---I'll assume disguises---I'll change my form oftener than Proteus himself---I'll watch her every movement---penetrate her every thought,---I'll never quit her;---and if she should prove unfaithful---if her constancy should waver for a moment,---if she should love another,---I'll---I'll---go back to Paris, and marry the opera girl I kept there!

BRASS. But recollect, sir, the six little ones.

SIR F. No, Brass, that'll never do.---I'll see Amelia!---I'll see her immediately!---I'll ask an explanation of this journey,---I'll know from her own lips what is her determination! (*Goes and raps at* L. H. *door.*) Ma'am!---I say, Ma'am!---Miss Amelia!---Amelia!---My Amelia---'tis Ferdinand speaks!

BRASS. Yes, Miss, 'tis Sir Ferdinand his own self; and here am I, Brass, at his elbow;---you know his Brass, Ma'am.

SIR F. Hold your tongue, you impudent scoundrel! Amelia! dear, lovely, sweet Amelia! answer me.

(AMELIA *and* PEGGY *are, meanwhile, watching and laughing at them from* R. H. *door.*)

What, won't you answer? Won't you speak to your own dear Ferdinand?---Amelia!

(*Returning away from the door.* AMELIA *and* PEGGY *retire.*)

No, I'll be damn'd if she will! --- I don't know what to make of this; it wears a very awkward look---I'll swear I heard her voice from that very room.

BRASS. And I'll swear I saw Peggy, sir.

SIR H. I *must* get into that room; I *will* have that door opened.--Amelia! if you don't open the door, I'll break it open.---Aye, they're determined not to open it.---By heavens! I begin to suspect that there *is* a man there---but I'll have him out, the villain! I'll expose the perfidious fair one--- I'll open a scene!---Do you run, Brass, and get me an iron crow, a pick-axe, a shovel;---if you can't get any thing else, bring the kitchen-poker!---whilst I go and make enquiries of the landlord; for satisfied I will be; and I'll break the door, if I can't break her heart. (*Exit.*)

BRASS. Directly, sir.

(*Exit.*)

Enter AMELIA *and* PEGGY.

PEG. So, so, madam---you see we need have no further anxiety about the wind and the pacquet-boats; this whirligig lover has come back on his steps, and seems as ardent as ever.

AM. More ardent than discreet or respectful.---He'll assume disguises, he'll watch my steps, and penetrate my thoughts;---but he shall find me a match for him, upon that score, I'll promise him. Do you, Peggy, go down by that staircase, and communicate my instructions to the landlord;---spare no money---whilst I prepare for the plan I have arranged.---Take care, good Sir Ferdinand, that you are not caught in your own trap!

(*Exeunt* AMELIA *and* PEGGY.)

Enter SIR FERDINAND, *followed by* BRASS, *with the Kitchen Poker.*

BRASS. Here, sir, is the kitchen-poker; it is the best tool I have been able to get; and I was obliged to give the fat cook half a dozen kisses before she would let me have it.

SIR F. I can learn nothing from the landlord, but that the young lady and her servant arrived about half an hour ago, and enquired very particularly about the Calais packets.

BRASS. Ah! sir, they're bitten by the same madness as ourselves; they're off for France.

SIR F. Aye, aye!---but I have a word or two to say to that bargain: the lover is to meet them, and they are to be married in France.---Eh! but I'll have a little explanation with Miss Amelia on that head, however. (*Goes to the door.*) Once for all, Amelia, will you open the door?---You won't? Then I will; so here goes.

(Takes the poker from BRASS, *and strikes the door violently.)*

Enter AMELIA *from the* L. H. *door, dressed as a Waiting Maid.*

AME. Och! gentlemen, and would you be after breaking the door down, now?

BRASS. What? that is not Peggy!---or has she learnt that beautiful brogue since I last had the pleasure of seeing her?---Pray are you Peggy?---and if you are, how long have you turned Irish?

PEG. Peggy! sure if you would be knowing my name, its Katty, at your honour's service.

SIR F. Zounds and the devil! I'm afraid this Irish girl's bulls will give me a pair of horns!---Well, Miss Katty, and what is your mistress's name?

AME. I'm not at liberty to tell your honour; my mistress is travelling *incog.*

SIR F. Incog!--the devil she is!--But where is she?---where is she going?---not to Ireland, by the way of Dover, I suppose?---let me see her?---tell her that Sir Ferdinand Frisky demands an interview.

AME. Fait, then, he must be contint with demanding that same:---the devil a sight of her beautiful face will he get the day.

SIR F. Pshaw! nonsense! don't talk about it; tell her I must, and will see her.

AME. Och! St. Patrick himself could not see her if he were here now---bating the Saint might be in two places at once.

SIR F. Pooh! pooh! I'm not to be trifled with! stand aside, child---you force me to be rude; but I will see her!

(*Pushes past* AMELIA, *and enters* L. H. *door.*)

BRASS. But where's Peggy, child?---do you know Peggy?

AME. Mistress's other attindant, is it you are maning?

Re-enter SIR FERDINAND *from* L. H. *door.*

SIR F. By hell! she is not there:---but I'll not give it up, if she'd a hundred Irish hussies to assist her plans. Tell me, wretch! where is she concealed?

AME. In a post chaise, sir.

SIR F. Concealed in a post chaise!---how odd! I'll search all the post chaises about the inn immediately.

AME. You may do that same, but by my sowl, you'd better begin the sarch at Brighton, for the chaise is half way there by this time---bating the bastes haven't gone poorly by the way.

SIR F. Death and the devil! What? gone! fled!---off, out of my reach!

AME. And myself will be after packing up the bits of things, and going in the mail in the morning---bating the mail don't go to night.

SIR F. Bating the devil! But I'll follow this minute, as soon as horses can be clapped to.---Four horses did you say your mistress had?

AME. Yes;---bating one was a mare, and the other a pony, which is much the same thing.

SIR F. Then I'll have six. Here, landlord! waiter! ostler! groom!---where the devil are you all?

Enter the LANDLORD,

LAND. What is your pleasure, sir?

SIR F. Get ready a chaise and six in an instant.

LAND. I'm afraid it's out of my power.

SIR F. You must do it, at all events. I'll pay any charge you please,---but a chaise and six I must have.

LAND. (*Exchanging the wink with Amelia.*) I'm exceedingly sorry, but the very last pair of horses I had in my stables are gone out with a chaise, within the last five minutes.

BRASS. The devil they are!

SIR F. What, and cannot I follow her? Confusion seize your inn, and your stables too! No horses?---Put to mules or asses!---damn it, can't you draw it yourself?---I'll shoot myself!---I'll shoot you, landlord!---I'll shoot you, Brass!---and I have a good mind to shoot you too, you little devil, you.

LAND. I expect some horses in about midnight, sir.

SIR F. Midnight!---Oh! by midnight, Amelia will be at Brighton;---before I can get there, she will have embarked; before I can procure a packet, she will be at Dieppe, and I shall lose sight of her for ever!

LAND. I can only promise you the first horses that come in, sir. [*Cross and Exit*, L. H.

BRASS. Have you any commands for me, sir?

SIR F. No,---yes,---go,---go to the devil!

BRASS. With your permission, sir, I'll go to supper in preference. [*Exit* BRASS.

SIR F. I shall go mad!---I'll certainly go stark raving mad! No I won't---I won't go mad for any woman.---I'll keep my senses,---I'll live and enjoy myself,---I'll eat, drink, and be merry,---I'll make love to every woman I meet,---Upon my soul, my dear, now I come to look at you, you are almost as pretty as your mistress,---and, now I look again, you are a devilish deal prettier.---I really think, my dear, that I'm half in love with you.

AME. Love is it? fait I must have whole love, or none at all at all.

SIR F. You are a devilish fine girl, let me tell you. Give me a kiss?

AME. Ah, now! what would you be after with a poor Irish sarving girl?---wouldn't paple be making their remarks?

SIR F. Oh that's it, is it? I see you are awake, my dear. Well, then, we'll talk about these things by and bye.---Will you meet me here presently, when all the house is quiet?

AME. Och, it's a swate, insinuating crature, you are, and I can't find in my heart to refuse you the favor.

SIR F. Dear creature!---then you will meet me? What time shall we say?

AME. Fait, Twelve Precisely---a convanient time enough.

SIR F. Twelve Precisely!---Oh, it's a most charming time.

AME. But what would mistress be after saying, if she knew?

SIR F. Oh never mind your mistress, my dear; she's far enough off by this time, and can't know any thing about it.

AME. (*Aside.*) I wouldn't have you make too sure of that.

SIR F. Twelve Precisely, my angel!---Seal the bargain with a kiss, and till twelve, adieu! (*Kisses her.*)

AME. Och! you divil, you! [*Exit into* L. H. *room.*]

Re-enter BRASS, R. H. *wing, eating.*

BRASS. Upon my word, sir, it's too bad; it is, indeed, sir.

SIR F. What's too bad, sir?

BRASS. Oh, sir! you, sir!---One can't turn one's back a minute, but you're interfering in one's department.

SIR F. Interfering in your department?---what the devil do you mean, sir?

BRASS. Why really, sir, I do think, under favor, that whilst we are on our travels, you might content yourself, sir, with making love to the ladies, sir, and leave the maids to me.

SIR F. Oh, you think that I ought to leave the maids to you, do you, sir? you monopolizing rascal! But let me tell you, sir, that maids or mistresses, I shall take the liberty of chusing for myself; and it so happens, in this instance, that the mistress is gone, and the maid is all that is left.

BRASS. Well, upon my word, it's really very hard, sir;---I'm sure you would not like it, if I were to make love to any of your ladies, and cut you out.

SIR F. And upon my word, you are a very insolent person; and if you don't pretty speedily convey your

carcase out of my sight, I shall make your case still harder, by a few kicks well applied.

BRASS. I beg you wouldn't mention it, sir.---I'm sure I meant no offence.

SIR F. Be off, sir. [*Exit* BRASS.

AME. (*Without, by* R. H. *door.*) Monsieur le Marquis, vous êtes tout a fait butôr, et je ne souffrirai nullement, vos insolences.

Enters from R. H. *door, dressed as a Parisian Belle.*

Ah! Monsieur, je vous demande bien pardon.

SIR F. Madame, a vous, pour jamais.---Never saw so lovely a creature in my life!---why there is not her equal in all Paris!---what grace! what loveliness!---My dear madam, can I be of any service?---I thought I heard you utter the language of complaint---I'm sure, madam, I shall be very happy to chastise---

AME. Ah! oui, Monsieur le Marquis, what it is my husband, vraiment il est un bête---it is von brute, vat he is---mais n'importe, je ne m'en soucis guere, it is not vat I shall care for him.

SIR F. My dear lady, surely no man could have the heart to treat with indifference such exquisite loveliness!

AME. Oh, Monsieur! vous etes bien poli---mais, but, dese animals, de vat you call husbands, dey are always de great bore.

SIR F. Very true, ma'am; it is sometimes the case.---I'm sorry you find it so.---I'm sure, if it were in my power to offer any consolation---if the devotion of my life---the warmest affection of my heart, could alleviate your cares, I should be too happy in laying them at your feet. (*Aside*) I know the way to titivate these French women.---I haven't been to Paris for nothing.

AME. Ah! Que vous avez le cœur tendre---your little heart is so tender. How ver kind you are: vraiment je me sens attendrie---I feel my littel heart go jomp, jomp, pit, pat. I shall be ver charmé to show you how moche I am penetrè---de vat you call toched---by your civilitè.

SIR F. Oh, most charming of creatures! Permit me ---(*throws himself on his knee, and kisses her hand*) to vow to protect you against all earthly dangers! to love you!---to---to---to---(*Aside*) What shall I say next?

AME. Oui; mais, Monsieur le Marquis is so ridicule, so ver stupide, d'être un peu jaloux, to be von littel bit jealous of his wife.

SIR F. Oh! damn his jealousy!---Come, my angel, suffer me to protect you at once from his jealousy and his brutality; take refuge in my arms---in my heart!

AME. Ah que je suis foible---how ver weak I am. It is impossible vat I should resist your addresse si touchante.---You are so pathetique.---Oui je suis---I feel dat my heart shall be your's, a jamais, for ever.

SIR F. Kind, exquisite, delightful creature!---Happy, happy, Ferdinand!

AME. Mais il faut que je fasse retour;---I must go back to de Marquis; he shall come and catch me here; et ca n'ira pas du tout. Oh, non! non!

SIR F. When shall I see you again then, my angel?

AME. Certainement, I shall come to you, je vous chercherais, sur les minuit, vat it is you call twelve o'clock.

SIR F. Twelve o'clock, did you say?

AME. A minuit precisement---at twelve precisely.

SIR F. Twelve! bless me, that's rather awkward---you couldn't make it half past, could you?

AME. Ah no! at twelve precise.

SIR F. Say a quarter past, there's a dear creature.

AME. Non! non! non! at twelve precisement--- comment donc vous ne voulez pas. A ladie come to you, you no laissez mois, let me fix de time.

SIR F. Oh yes, my dear creature, any time in the world---all and every thing shall be sacrificed for your sake---at twelve, be it then.

AME. Je vous verrai donc---I shall meet you here, a-top dis very place.

SIR F. By all that's lovely!

AME. Au revoir! Adieu! mon mignon, my pretty creature!

SIR F. Adieu! sweet charmer:---I shall count the minutes.

(He kisses her hand; she retires by R. H. *door.)*

At twelve precisely!---how cursedly awkward!---why that's the very hour of my appointment with the little chambermaid. It seems quite a favourite time with the ladies.---What the devil is to be done?---it's very certain

that I can't manage them both at once---I must give up one, then---which is it to be?---why, surely the Marchioness must have the preference---and then I must resign the soubrette to Brass :---that's a cursed pity! but it can't be helped; that fellow must be trusted with all, he must take her off my hands.---Here, Brass!

Enter BRASS.

BRASS. Here I am, sir---wherever you are, Brass is not very far off.

SIR F. Brass, I am a very kind, good-natured master to you, Brass.

BRASS. Pretty well, thank you, sir.

SIR F. I am going to do you a great favor, Brass.

BRASS. I am much obliged sir; it is not to pay me my wages, is it, sir?

SIR F. No, Brass, it is not that; but I am going to make you the happiest of men ;---I am going to bestow on you a gift, which monarchs might envy.

BRASS. Lord! sir, what is it?

SIR. F. (*Softly and significantly.*) I am going to give up to you the pretty little chambermaid.

BRASS. Is that all sir?

SIR. F. All! and what the devil would you have more, fellow? Oh Brass! I see you are a monster of ingratitude;---you don't value my favours.

BRASS. Oh yes, I do, sir; but it is the little girl's favours I want in this case; and you are giving away very generously what is not yours to bestow.

SIR F. She has promised to meet me here at twelve precisely. Now you must be here at the moment;--it will be dark---she won't see that damn'd ugly face of yours---and get her out of the way; for I have another game to play upon the same spot;---

(AMELIA, *enveloped from head to foot in a large cloak, steals from* L. H. *door, and exit by* L. H. *wing.*)

A French Marchioness, you dog, that lives in that room, (*pointing to* R. H. *door.*) with a jealous brute of a husband, has promised to meet me here at twelve o'clock!---the most lovely angelic creature!

BRASS. Lord, sir! you're a devil of a fellow!---but I've no particular objection to obliging you, sir.---

SIR F. Obliging me ?---you ungrateful rascal ! when you ought to fall down on your knees, and thank me---

BASS. You'll excuse me, sir; but you know you can't do without me.---

SIR F. (*Aside*) Egad ! that's very true.

BRASS. And sooner than spoil any affairs of yours, I'll take the young woman out of your way, sir ;---but I hope you don't suspect my morals, sir ?

SIR F. Oh no, Brass! I think I know them pretty well.

BRASS. Then I'll go and finish my supper, sir, if you please, sir?

SIR F. Do, Brass ! (*Exit Brass.*)

AME. (*Without, in a blustering tone.*) Show me instantly to his apartment!---I must and will see him, immediately !

BRASS. (*Heard without.*) You'll find my master in that room, sir !

Enter AMELIA, *dressed in an English uniform.*

SIR F. The honor of this visit, sir !

AME. No ceremony, sir ; I have no time for it.---I mean to cut the matter very short.

SIR F. Yes sir, and to cut me very short, it should seem, sir.

AME. Shorter by the head, sir, if I am fortunate ; or else I shall lay low myself.

SIR F. Really, sir!---

AME. It's of no use, sir, for you to stand chattering there, with your tedious circumlocutions, when I mean to go direct to the point.

SIR F. Pray do, sir.

AME. Then don't keep interrupting me, with your cursed long, round-about speeches; let me come to the main question at once.

SIR F. Upon my soul!---

AME. Give me leave to observe sir, that it is damned rude to interrupt a gentleman in the thread of his discourse, with your long-winded explanations.

SIR F. (*Aside.*) Curse me, if I can get a word in edgeways !

AME. To proceed, sir:---you happen to know one Miss Amelia Wildlove ?

SIR F. Very intimately, sir.

AME. Then, sir, I am that Miss Amelia Wildlove.

SIR F. Indeed, sir!

AME. Miss Amelia Wildlove's brother, I was about to have said, sir, if your abominably ill-bred habit of interrupting, had not prevented me.

SIR F. Give me leave to observe---

AME. There you go again; you'll never let me come to the end of my story---you are so confounded hasty.

SIR F. (*Aside*) The most impudent dog I ever met in my life!---he beats Brass hollow.

AME. Then, sir, I have to remark, that your conduct to my sister, Miss Amelia Wildlove, has been cruel, scandalous, and ungentlemanly in the extreme; and I am come here for the purpose of demanding satisfaction.

SIR F. Satisfaction, sir!

AME. Yes, sir, satisfaction. After six months' courtship, after gaining the poor girl's affections, after having fixed the very wedding day, to take yourself off in the most unaccountable manner, without a word of explanation;---Oh, it's not to be endured, sir! and I must have satisfaction.

SIR F. You shall have the very best satisfaction I can offer you;---take me to your sister, sir, and with her consent, she shall be Lady Frisky within an hour from our meeting.

AME. No, no, Sir, this tardy reparation, which the fear of my vengeance extorts from you, comes too late. Sir, my sister's character is committed by your departure; her heart is broken by your desertion, and nothing but your life, sir, can atone her wrongs. For shame! for shame! to wear the form of man, and thus to trample on the feelings of a woman. I never was, never will be, guilty of injuring one of that angel sex. I adore them; I would sacrifice my life to avenge their wrongs; for I feel their injuries as acutely as if they were my own.

SIR F. This is a most strange kind of discourse, sir; but since you have been pleased to hint at fear, sir, I shall show you that it is not the trumpery bit of scarlet on your back, that can protect you from my resentment; and prove to you, that courage may be found without a

cockade in it's hat.---Name your weapons, time, and place, sir.

AME. Pistols,---the Shakspeare Cliff,---at Twelve Precisely.

SIR F. What time did you say, sir?---Twelve Precisely! Really that's a very odd time, sir. Will not your impatience wait till morning?

AME. I am about to join my regiment in France, sir, and, at half past twelve, I must be on board the transport.

SIR F. Then why wait till the last moment?---I will attend you directly.

AME. No, no, sir, I have some little affairs to settle between now and then. Twelve must be the time.

SIR F. But I assure you, sir, that a most pressing engagement, which admits not of postponement, will, at that hour, require my attention.

AME. Paltry excuse, to avoid me!---Come, come, sir, don't show the white feather: if once you are afraid of me, I shall know how to treat you. Don't tremble so: ---what engagement, sir, can be more imperative than the vindication of your honor?

SIR F. Your insinuations, sir, are to be repelled but in one manner:---at twelve I wait upon you.

AME. At twelve, I shall look for you here, sir; and in the mean time, I have letters of importance to write; but the inn is so full, that I know not where I shall be able---

SIR F. My apartment, in which you will find writing materials, is entirely at your service, sir.

AME. Sir, I am indebted to your complaisance, and shall avail myself of your offer; and I recommend you to bottle up your courage against twelve o'clock:---you'll find me punctual; I always am on these occasions.---You'll add one more to my list of killed and wounded. Excuse me, sir; I would advise you as a friend---mark me! as a friend---to send for your undertaker.---It's a dreadful thing, you may depend upon it.

[*Exit by* M. D.]

SIR F. Well, upon my soul, this is vastly agreeable! This little bit of a red-jacketed cock sparrow has been told that the only way to make himself a man is to incur the risk of becoming a dead one; and, because I and his sister have had a little misunderstanding, he

must chuse me for his first mark. Confound the fellow! I would snuff him out of the world, with as little concern as I would a rushlight;---but he must fix twelve o'clock:---the devil fetch him !---twelve o'clock, when I was to have been much more agreeably engaged. I wonder what the devil people see in that hour of all others, that all appointments of love and war must be fixed at midnight.---We are going to change hours with the ghosts, and I suppose we shall have them walking about by broad daylight. Here, Brass! Brass! you're wanted.

Enter BRASS.

BRASS. I often am, sir, now-adays; there's no getting through the world without me.

SIR F. True, Brass.---Here, Brass, I'm in a devil of a mess.---I believe I must get you to take care of the Marchioness for me and all.---No, that won't do, neither, because you must go out with me.

BRASS. Go out, sir! Laws! where are you going to, to night, sir?

SIR F. To be shot, Brass.

BRASS. Laws, sir! don't think of such a thing; what can have put it into your head?

SIR F. Oh, a young gentleman in a red jacket; and he means to put a bullet into my head too, if I don't put one in his---a brother of Miss Amelia's, who not approving of my late excursion, wishes now to send me on one into the other world.

BRASS. Ah, sir! I always thought that trip to Paris was a bad business, and that no good could come from it.

SIR F. Oh! curse the fellow and his fighting freak! I should not value it a rush;---but no time will suit the coxcomb, but twelve at night.

BRASS. Twelve at night! why, sir, it will be the first duel that was ever fought by candle-light.

SIR F. Yes, Brass, and you must stand between us with a lanthorn.

BRASS. I'll hold it at the end of a particularly long pole, if you please, sir.---But then my appointment with the chambermaid, sir?

SIR F. I don't know what is to become of our appointments, Brass; but suppose, as nobody else will be

on the prowl, the ladies must amuse each other for a quarter of an hour; we shall have dispatched our affair with Mars by that time, and can return, wreathed with glory, to the arms of Venus.

BRASS. Yes, sir, perhaps with a few shot holes that will let day-light through us.

SIR F. That can't be helped:---you must see to my pistols, Brass; carefully clean them, dry a few charges of powder, and weigh nicely a brace of balls.

BRASS. Oh, sir, it's a very awful affair; I begin to feel very much affected;---had you not better make your will, sir?---I hope you will remember your poor servant, sir.---Oh dear! oh dear! (*Blubbers.*)

AME. (*Heard without at* R. H. *door.*) Sacre bleu---Madame---vous me croyez fou---nous verrous---

SIR F. What the devil's in the wind now, I wonder?---

Enter AMELIA, *dressed a French Gallant of the Old School.*

AME. Aha! le voila, monsieur, je vous demande bien pardon von littel affaire d'honneur, how you do, sair?

SIR. F. Pretty well, I thank you, sir;---but who the devil are you?

AME. Who it is I am?---Allons, je vais vous expliquer. I go to tell you, who it is I am. Sair, I have be de great man among de great men---I was grand favori of his Majestè, Louis Seize, and I have ren away wid him, ven he did leave de France.

SIR F. Yes, I dare say you'd much rather run away with him, than stop and fight with him.

AME. And at the battel of Quiberon, I did jomp into de watere, and swim, swim, swim, so vell vat I can, vilst de balles, de boulets did viz, viz, viz, round my head.

SIR F. I wish, with all my heart, that one of them had hit it!

AME. Sair, I have dance at de Court of Versailles, avec toutes les plus belles dames, de most beautiful ladie of de Court---sair, I have make de lofe to dem all, not one did make de lofe to me.

SIR F. They must have had a cursed queer taste if they had!

AME. Den, sair, you see what great man I am, and you tink I shall let a you make a de lofe to Madame la

Marquise, to my wife. I can't let no man beneath a duke make a de lofe to my vife.

SIR F. The devil you can't! I can only say that my not being a duke is quite as unpleasant to my feelings as it can be to yours.

AME. Monsieur, il ne vaut que deux mots---I shall tell to you in two word, vat I shall ron you through your littel bodie.

SIR F. Oh, you will, will you?---you'd much better run away, as you did before.

AME. Ah oui, monsieur, je le ferai certainement.---I shall do it in the most elegant maniere.---I shall prick you vere you like; in de heart, in de kidney, I shall bleed you in de wrist, I shall pick your teet wid my rapier, or I shall put your two eye in one.

SIR F. What an obliging creature!---And pray, when is this to be done?

AME. And for de time?---voyons donc---it shall be a minuit, at twelf precisement.

SIR F. The devil it shall! at twelve, did you say?

AME. At five minuit after twelf, you shall be de dead man.

SIR F. Here's a pretty fellow!---But I tell you, my dear sir, though it's very likely I shall be a dead man by that time, I can't possibly have the honor of being run through by you, because another gentleman is beforehand with you, and has fixed twelve o'clock to shoot me.

AME. Aha! You go to fight wid de pistolet? Now, to show you, vat I go to kill you comme il faut, like a gentleman, sans malice, quite in goot friend, I shall go wid you to your appointement; I shall be de seconde first, and I shall be firste de second.

SIR F. How the devil shall I ever manage all this? Two women to run away with, and two men to fight, at this cursed hour of twelve precisely!

AME. Aha! We shall have de ver pretty play! How ver fonny you shall look, ven I have pin you against de wall.

SIR F. Pin me against the wall? Oh, dear me! yes, very funny.

AME. I shall tell to you, if you had not toche my honneur, I should have very inoche shew you, com-

ment, how to make de lofe; parce quil faut vous dire---I must tell to you, dat you dit make de lofe to my vife in de maniere tout a fait barbare, not at all elegante.---Mais n'importe, nous verrons, at twelf o'clock---a ha ! mon Dieu, how I shall make you skip---you shall skip ---hop---jomp.---Oh que oui---it shall be so ver comique : you shall ron from me, I shall ron to you, and den I shall ron you tro' your littel bodie---au revoir, mon ami !

(*Exit by* R. H. *door.*)

Enter BRASS, L. H. *wing, with a brace of pistols.*

BRASS. Here they are sir, quite ready; how bright! how beautiful !---how cursedly killing they look, sir!

SIR F. Here's another scrape, Brass!---another appointment for twelve o'clock.

BRASS. With a woman or a man, sir?

SIR F. Oh! with a man---the devil take him ! The abominable fool of a French Marquis, I suppose has overheard my appointment with his wife, and nothing will satisfy him but running me thro' the body at twelve o'clock.

BRASS. Perhaps the soldier will save him the trouble, sir.

SIR F. Which ever of them does send me out of the world at twelve o'clock, shall dread that hour all the rest of their lives; my ghost, Brass, shall haunt them every night, in the shape of a watchman, crying "twelve o'clock!" and strike terror to their hard hearts.

BRASS. Lord! Lord! sir, don't talk so dismal! you frighten me, sir; I shall always be afraid of twelve o'clock, myself sir.---Hark!

(*A Clock strikes.*)

SIR F. There it is, Brass! now Fortune befriend me! Glory first, and Love afterwards.

AME. (*Speaks as Chambermaid at* L. H. *door.*) Here I am, my darling, to the moment.

SIR F. The devil you are!---well, I can't attend to you now, my dear.

AME. (*Speaking at* M. D. *as* FRED. WILDLOVE.) Now, sir, your knell has rung---are you prepared ?

SIR F. Oh perfectly, sir; you are in a devil of a hurry, though.---If I could but get a word with the Marchioness, first.

AME. (*Speaking as the Marquis at* R. H. *door.*) Allons, Monsieur Marchons, a la mort a la gloire,---I'm quite ready. (*Changes the voice to that of the Marchioness.*) Ah barbare! cruel! èpargnez.---Oh mon amour, mon ami---come to me, to my heart!

SIR F. With all the pleasure in life, my dear, as soon as I have dispatched your booby of a husband!

AME. (*As the Marquis.*) Vat is dat you call de boobie? I shall boobie you.

SIR F. Come along---all of you; here I am.

Enter the LANDLORD.

LAND. There are six horses just come in, sir; and you may have a chaise for Brighton immediately, if you please.

SIR F. A chaise for Brighton, and join Amelia! delightful! charming! good bye, all of you.---Adieu! pretty Katty.---Pardonnez moi, my fair Marchioness! Mr. Wildlove, I shall give you a better satisfaction than shooting you; and Monsieur le Marquis, I am yours, at Dieppe, to-morrow night at the same hour.

AME. (*As Chambermaid, at* L. H. *door.*) Och! the sowl! and is it running away from me, you'd be after?

SIR F. Yes, my dear, without so much as a parting kiss.

AME. (*At* M. D. *as Wildlove.*) What, sir! do you run away from an appointment of honor?---Shame! shame!

SIR F. My honor I feel calls me another way, and I shall have resolution to obey its dictates.

AME. (*At* R. H. *door, as Marchioness.*) Ah! le traitre! il me perd!---he forsake, abandon me!---ah, perfide! (*Changing voice to Marquis.*) Il veut s'echapper!---he go to run away!---Oh, le poltron! le parvenu!---de vat you call damn coward!

SIR F. What the devil shall I do? Just as I want to set off in pursuit of my Amelia, these cursed fellows want to set me off to the other world. I feel that I owe to that dear girl every reparation, and I would make it to her, at the expense of all visionary notions of honor. Dam'me, how shall I get off?---I have it; I'll lock them

all up. (*Locks* M. D.) Come, there you are, my fighting cock. (*Locks* R. H. *door.*) Monsieur le Marquis, instead of taking your revenge on me, persuade your wife to be more constant. I'll just turn the key on the little Irish jade, and then all for love and Amelia!---they may kick up all the row they like.

(*He has returned to* L. H. *door. As he is on the point of locking it, enter* AMELIA *from it, in propria persona.*)

AME. Amelia accepts the sacrifice.

SIR F. Amelia!---do my senses deceive me?

AME. No, but they have done for the last hour.

SIR F. And after having made a fool of myself abroad, am I come home to be made a fool of by you?

AME. My effort has been but to cure your folly.

SIR F. And it has done so most completely, sweet Amelia. I could never have believed it, though, if any one had told me you could have tricked me so confoundedly.

AME. What cannot woman's ingenuity accomplish, to secure the heart she values?--What will she not attempt, to obtain the inspiring plaudits of her best friends?---and how amply are her efforts rewarded, if she can excite their smiles at "Twelve Precisely," and each succeeding night pass pleasantly as "The Night at Dover."

(*During the dialogue,* PEGGY *has come from* L. H: *door, and has joined in the picture with* BRASS.)

FINIS.

Hodgson, Printer, 25, Fleet Street.

THE

CARIB CHIEF:

A TRAGEDY

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY

HORACE TWISS, Esq.

Third Edition.

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1819.

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TO THE

EARL OF CLARENDON.

My Lord,

If that high reputation for literary taste, which Your Lordship has sought in vain to conceal among the shades of Your retreat, had been the only argument for presenting this drama to Your notice, I might have yielded to a dangerous vanity, in soliciting the attention of so accomplished a judge. But it has been my good fortune to know how kindly Your Lordship ever grants, to the deficiencies of others, that indulgence, of which You can so little need the return; and with

such an encouragement, I am unable to resist the proud gratification of thus recording, that among the many other proofs of regard, with which I have been honoured by Your Lordship, I have now been thought worthy of the permission to subscribe myself,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obliged

and obedient servant,

HORACE TWISS.

London, May 15, 1819.

PROLOGUE,

BY THE AUTHOR OF THE TRAGEDY:

SPOKEN BY

Mr. H. KEMBLE.

[The lines marked by inverted commas are omitted in the recitation.]

When the rude Masters of the early time
Pursu'd young nature in her yielding prime,
" Threw up her maiden veil, and with blest arms
" Rifled the wild abundance of her charms,"
Then was each brightest, most expressive grace,
And loftiest feature of her varying face,
Painted from life, in many a breathing line,
Warm as herself, and like herself, divine.

" The bards that follow'd, found their choice forestall'd,
" And dealt out copies, classically bald,
" Till, at third hand, poor nature was become
" A flat, evap'rate *caput mortuum*.
" Then, mad for novelty, inventors drew
" Things novel, both in art and nature too;
" Persons not human, passions that might seem
" The over-wrought convulsions of a dream;
" Left-handed plots, that mov'd but by the start,
" And griefs, that reach'd, but to revolt the heart."

Those days are past. If now the means remain
To wake the Drama into life again,
Where shall we seek them? Not in monstrous woes,
The ultra tragedy of spasms and throes;
Nor in faint copies from our father's drafts,

Barren as cuttings of exhausted grafts,—
But in a fresh adventure to explore
Nature's own fields, if haply they of yore
Have, in their forage of that fair demesne,
Left some ungather'd fruit for us to glean.

Such is our hope to-night. Our simple plot
Chooses an unreclaim'd and distant spot:
For since the arbiters of taste expect
All to be new, yet all to be correct,
No course was left us, but to guide the helm,
To some remote, but not unfruitful realm—
Where no preceding bard had touch'd, to claim
Possession in his Sov'reign Muse's name.

Yet may these sketches of uncultur'd life,
Its fiery appetite and stormy strife,
Avail to warn, how passions unrepress
Usurp, corrode, and desolate the breast;
Drag us unsatisfied, through lengthen'd years
Of impotent desires and carking fears;
Or bring at last fruition's fatal joy,
Like Jove's embrace, in lightnings that destroy!

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

OMREAH, the Carib Prince of the southern district of Dominica	*Mr. Kean.*
MALOCH, a native Prince of the northern district of Dominica	*Mr. Holland.*
CARBAL, the Chief Priest of Maloch	*Mr. D. Fisher.*
LOGAMAH, Carbal's Brother - - -	*Mr. Hamblin.*
BRANCHO, a Priest, follower of Omreah - - - - - - - -	*Mr. Ley.*
TREFUSIS, an English General -	*Mr. H. Kemble.*
MONTALBERT, Commander of the French Garrisons in Dominica and Guadaloupe - - - -	*Mr. Bengough.*
COLMAR, Lieutenant to Montalbert	*Mr. R. Phillips.*
D'ARCY, an Officer of Montalbert's Garrison - - - - - - - -	*Mr. Yarnold.*
CLAUDINA, Montalbert's Bride, of Indian origin - - - - -	*Mrs. W. West.*
KATHELRADE, an Indian Woman, Foster-mother of Montalbert	*Miss Boyce.*
MARIAN, Claudina's Friend, Daughter of Colmar - - -	*Miss Cooke.*

English and French Soldiers. Attendants, male and female. Carib Priests and Warriors.

Scene, the Island of Dominica: Time, the beginning of the Reign of Elizabeth.

[*The Author cannot allow this Play to be hurried through the press, without offering his tribute of admiration to those splendid exertions of Mr. KEAN, by which its unprecedented success has been atchieved. The interest has been much assisted by the tenderness and delicacy of Mrs. West; and while Miss Boyce, Mr. H. Kemble, Mr. D. Fisher, Mr. Holland, Mr. Bengough, and Mr. Hamblin, in the other principal characters, have so materially contributed their valuable aid, the Performers at large have, by their diligence and propriety, completed the general effect of the representation.*]

THE

CARIB CHIEF.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

A Subterraneous Cavern.

TREFUSIS *rises from a rude seat, and comes forward.*

Tre. DAYS, months, and seasons creep away—and still
A dungeon cave in Dominica thus
Shuts me from light, and love!—And thou, Claudina,
Dost thou still mourn thy lost, thy vanquish'd soldier?
Or art thou, in this lapse of hopeless years,
Wearied at last of thinking upon him
Who cannot cease to think and doat on thee!

TREFUSIS *turns up the stage.* CARBAL *enters through a wicket gate, which he unlocks.*

Carb. What hoa! Trefusis!

Tre. Carbal! come again
To bring the unwelcome sustenance that prolongs
This wretched life of mine?
Carb. I come to bring
What makes life worth the wishing—liberty!
Tre. Mock not your prisoner, Carbal; you were wont
To seem my friend.
Carb. And by my deeds will prove
That friendship true. If I have ris'n above
My rugged nature, turned the ancient priesthood
Which I inherit, to the means of blessing
My untaught brethren, and obtained the trust
And countenance of our king, 'tis your instruction,
Daily bestow'd upon me through your long
And hard captivity, that has advanced
And blest my fortune. You are free, Trefusis.
Tre. My freedom, and my past imprisonment,
Are equal mysteries.
Carb. Mysteries now no more.
When, sixteen years ago, Montalbert first
Usurp'd for France our hapless Dominica,
Two chiefs possess'd its rule. Maloch, our prince,
By tribute of some threescore slaves to France,
Preserved this northern kingdom: while Omreah,
The southern chief, resisting, was o'erthrown,
And sold to bondage. Peace remain'd, till you,
Two summers since, with England's power, assail'd
The French possessions here.
Tre. Pass all the rest,
And tell me why, on waking from the shock

Which, in the battle, stunn'd and laid me low,
I found myself a prisoner?
Carb. When the fight
Was over, and the evening breeze sprang up,
Maloch, our king, went forth with me to search
For one of his fall'n kindred. Finding you
Stunn'd as one dead, he bade me bear you hither,
And fan the spark of life; that, in his hands,
The person of so famed an officer
Might be a boon for England or for France,
As best should suit his interests. He at last
Resolved to treat with France: to tell Montalbert
The secret of your preservation here,
And yield your fate to his disposal.
Tre. How!
Is it Montalbert's will that has assign'd me
This living burial? Though our public duty
Ranged us in adverse arms, I yet had hoped
Our private friendship might survive.
Carb. But friendship
Gives way to love. You were betroth'd, I think,
To that soft, dark-eyed maid, whom in her childhood
Montalbert rescued from a ruffian's grasp—
His young Claudina——
Tre. Speak!—my heart grows faint.
Carb. Montalbert, as it seems, had loved her long:
But while he thought you living, had repress'd
His inly-burning passion. When you fell
In battle, he, persuaded of your death,
Reveal'd his love. The news of your revival
Came like a blight upon him; and he charged us
On peril of our lives to keep the secret,

And guard you buried in this unknown cell.
Thus had two years gone by.
Tre. And has Claudina?——
Carb. For those two years, she liv'd but to lament
Her slain Trefusis. Time and gratitude
At last, though coldly, won Montalbert's suit:
And only twelve days since, at Guadaloupe,
They were united.
Tre. Why, farewell then, hope,
Life, liberty, farewell!
Carb. Life—liberty——
Are precious now, for they will give you vengeance.
I long had wish'd to set you free, and profit
By your experience in the arts of war,
For shaking off the yoke of France; but Maloch,
Our king, restrain'd my will. At length, Omreah,
The chieftain of the south, enlarged from bondage,
Lands on the isle, excites our Carib warriors,
And conquers back our southern Dominica:
While, on the neighbouring coast of Guadaloupe,
Montalbert's nuptial joys have been disturb'd
By a strong force of English, which your queen,
The bold Elizabeth, has arm'd from Britain.
Tre. Justice approaches then!
Carb. I urged our king
To seize the occasion, and throw off the power
Of tyrant France. Omreah's fortune warm'd
His cautious spirit; but th' appalling strength
Of the French fortress on this isle, was still
A check to our revolt.
Tre. And must be ever,

Until some good ally shall bring you store
Of stout artill'ry.
Carb. That have I provided
From England's officers at Guadaloupe.
Tre. Who is our general there?
Carb. Fitzjohn, your comrade;
The tidings of your safety gladden'd him:
And he has promis'd, if to-day shall crown
The English victory in Guadaloupe,
He will, this night, dispatch the aids we need
To storm the fortress here; of which adventure
He gives command to you.
Tre. Could aught revive
A heart, benumb'd by such despair as mine,
This call to vengeance might awake its pulse,
And nerve it into act! ——
Carb. Screen'd by the darkness,
The English troops will land, and lie conceal'd
By the North Headland, till you send a guide
To march them tow'rd the fort. And to prevent
Ambush, or other stratagem by France,
Fitzjohn requests the guide, you shall commission,
May bear this ring, in token that he comes
At your command.
Tre. I shall observe his caution:—
But one word more for my distracted heart,
Then I am all my country's. In the siege
Of Guadaloupe, how has Claudina fared?
Carb. Safely and well. It is Montalbert's purpose,
For more security, to send her hither:
Perhaps himself to share her flight and refuge

Tre. Shall I then breathe again the air that fans her?
See her perchance within the crumbling towers
Of her false lord, and save her in the assault?
Carb. Trust me, whatever else our warriors dare,
Claudina shall be sacred. But 'tis time
We speed to Maloch's tent.
Tre. Joy has withdrawn
Her sunshine; but the hope of vengeance, like
The swarthy glow of the swoll'n thundercloud,
Yet casts a lustre on the darken'd sky,
And lights the road to death!—
Carb. Away! away! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The North Headland, overlooking the sea; a watch-tower at the back of the stage.

Enter MARIAN, *meeting and embracing* CLAUDINA, *and* COLMAR.

Mar. Welcome, dear father, and my much-lov'd friend:
Comes not my lord with you?
Clau. Montalbert's here,
Conferring with his soldiers.

Enter MONTALBERT.

Mont. My Claudina!
This isle, where I had hoped a shelter for you,

Is scarce more safe than that we've left. Omreah,
The untam'd prince o' the south, whom I o'ercame,
And sold to slavery, having burst his chains,
Has rais'd the standard of revolt, and seeks
A vengeance, just, though late, for that black hour,
Wherein his wife, child, kin, and all his house,
I grieve to tell, were savagely cut off,
By our marauding troops.

Clau. Blest had I been,
If, with so many of the wretched stock
From whom I sprang, I had in infancy
Partaken that destruction!

Mont. Say not so:
The preservation of your life is all
That brightens that dark history. I see you,
Imploring with your little hands, the wretch
Who grasp'd your throat, as he prepar'd to slay you
For those fair gems—the very chain that now
Adorns your polish'd neck.

Clau. I wear it ever,
In hopes that it may one day prove a clue
To trace my birth. For my sake, dear my lord,
Have mercy on my untaught countrymen;
And spare the further shedding of that blood,
Whence your Claudina springs!

Mont. It must be shed,
If we would spare our own. Omreah's sallies
Have sorely gall'd our troops: in vain, rewards
Are offer'd for his life: fear spreads his fame;
Heaven seconds him; and ev'n our garrison,
Dishearten'd by our fall at Guadaloupe,
Quake at his progress.

Clau. Thrice unhappy daughter
Of an unhappy race!—Where'er I fly,
Misfortune travels with me!
Mont. We shall yet
Outstrip her malice. Colmar, to the fort,
And let that native priest, that glozing Carbal,
Who was observed at Guadaloupe conveying
Dispatches and provision to the English,
Be led to-morrow, by the break of day,
To execution.
Clau. Not to-morrow! Let not
Death mark our coming. Think, too, of his mother,
Your Indian nurse, your faithful Kathelrade,
Whose heart will break to lose him.
Mont. For your sake,
For Kathelrade's, I would most gladly spare him;
But Dominica is at stake: the traitor
Would lose us all; and at a time like this,
A soldier's justice must be exemplary.
See it performed!— [*Exit* COLMAR.
When sunset cools the air,
You too, my love, shall forward to the fort,
Whither, when I have duly arm'd this point
Against surprise from England, I will follow.
[*Exit* MONTALBERT.
Mar. I hoped to see your bridal visit paid
With happier omen.
Clau. It has one relief,
That I can here embrace my childhood's friend,
And open all my aching heart to Marian:
For these afflictions, with the earlier griefs
Whose cureless pain has wrung my soul so long,
Are wasting me to death.

Mar. The earlier griefs ?
Have not these nuptial rites, the lapse of time,
Nor the fresh tumult of this English war,
Worn out their memory ?
Clau. These have but increased
My bosom's strife. How may Montalbert's bride
Dwell without guilt on the too constant love
She bore another ? Yet, how chase the thought
Of him, whose image, and fond memory
This fatal shore so bitterly renews,
My slaughtered, brave Trefusis ? Here he fell,
In the attempt against an adversary
Whom I have wedded—who, till war broke forth
'Twixt France and England, had himself design'd
Trefusis for my husband.
Mar. Time, Claudina,
And your Montalbert's lasting tenderness,
Will soften these regrets.
Clau. Heaven knows how truly
I feel Montalbert's goodness. He preserved
My infant life : supplied the place of parents,
Whom haply that wide massacre destroyed ;
But, oh ! it was Trefusis that alone
Possess'd my love : the few short happy hours
An orphan girl could know, were made by him,
With him were lost for ever.
Mar. We will speak
No further, till refreshment and repose
Have cool'd your fever'd pulse. With them return
The breathing influence of cheerfulness,
And health-restoring hope.
Claud. Oh, Marian, never,

Never again for me. Hope's genial dews,
So freshly scatter'd at the dawn of youth,
Still vanish from us as the burning day
Grows fierce; and we are left at sultry noon,
Parching and faint, upon the wastes of life!
[*Exeunt into the Watch Tower.*

SCENE III.

Wild Scenery, with a Mountain Bridge.

Enter BRANCHO, *and* LOGAMAH, *meeting.*

Bra. Who comes? Logamah?
Log. Aye! with welcome tidings
For prince Omrean.
Bra. He advances hither
With speed, but yet with caution: for the French,
Stung by our victories, have proclaim'd Omreah
An outlaw, and a rebel: and rewards
Are offer'd for his head. At every turn
We apprehend an ambush.
[*Wild music at a distance.*
Log. Hark!—the music
Of his approaching march swells on the wind—
His warriors cross the bridge, and in their van
The prince himself. [*Wild music nearer.*
[*The Caribs cross the bridge, under the command of* OMREAH.
Omr. Halt there, below the crag!—

Prepare your arms, and be in readiness
To march again upon the instant.

[OMREAH *re-crosses the bridge, and disappears behind the rocks, descending toward the glen where* BRANCHO *and* LOGAMAH *are conversing; they are supposed to see him as he descends. The report of two musquets is heard.*]

Bra. See!——
What murd'rous spies are those?—two Frenchmen, lured
By the proclaim'd reward.—Oh, save him! save him!

[BRANCHO *rushes toward the spot where* OMREAH *is supposed to be attacked, and begins to climb the rocks. The clashing of swords is heard.*]

Log. He turns!—they strike!—he fights!—he warms!—he rages!
The foremost is disarmed—Omreah grasps
And hurls him down the gulph!——

Bra. (stopping in his ascent.) His fellow flies,
And leaves the prince in safety!

Omr. (without) Chase the villain—
Quick!—let him not escape to tell the tale
Of our approach—quick—follow!——

Enter OMREAH, *not recognizing them, and rushing wildly on, as if against an enemy.*

More assassins!——
What ho, there!—to the rescue!

[*Recovering himself, and recognizing* BRANCHO *and* LOGAMAH.

Pardon, friends!
I'm chafed, and hunted, till my dizzy sight
Scarce knows its office. Twice within these six hours
Have I escaped the European bloodhounds
Montalbert baits against me.
Bra. Thank the gods!
Omr. I do! I do!—They spare me for their work
Of retribution, and I will perform
That sacred task of blood, to the last drop
That curdles in the veins of him I hate.
What! is his guilty soul so much afraid
Of open combat with the man he has wrong'd,
That he must dodge me thus, and set his hirelings
Upon my path!—Let them beware of me,
For the wild quarry yet may make a spring,
And rend his dastard hunters!
Log. They have reach'd
The end of all their triumph, for I bring you
News that confirm your purpose and your power.
Omr. What!—from the North?—ha! ha! is Maloch roused?
Has he found heart to join our enterprise?
Log. My brother Carbal spurred him to the venture;
Urging the shock Montalbert has received
At Guadaloupe, and this so fair occasion
To join and crush the remnant of the French.
Omr. 'Twas bravely reason'd: Maloch joins us, then?
Log. He does: he knows your warriors are in march,
And trusts to see you in his tents to-night.

To-morrow, by the dawn of day, we purpose
To pour upon the French.
Omr. That when the fate
Of Guadaloupe drives back Montalbert hither
For shelter and repose, yon blazing fortress
May be the bonfire of his welcome here,
And sudden death his sanctuary—Oh!
Death to himself alone!—unequal fate!
Why can I reach no further? Why has he
No ties like mine—no wife, no child, on whom
I might repay the slaughter of my own,
And strike a three-tongued dagger to *his* heart,
Such as now cankers mine!——
Log. Know you not, then,
That he comes here a bridegroom?
Omr. Can it be?——
Can fate relent?—and brings his bride to us?
Log. Perchance to-morrow: therefore we propose
To make th' attack at dawn, lest he arrive
With further force, and foil us.
Omr. Why not strike
This very night?—there will be work enough
Still left for us to-morrow—Back to Maloch!
Say we are coming.—— [*Exit* LOGAMAH.
Holy Brancho, pray
The blessing of our gods: then let the warriors
March on at once, northward, to Maloch's tents.
The dusk will veil you as you pass the fort——
March!
Bra. You're obey'd.
[*Exit* BRANCHO. *Wild music. The Indians disappear from the rocks.*
Omr. Come, great Montalbert! bring
Thy bride, to see and share the devastation

To-morrow's day-break shall reveal!—To-morrow!
Thou know'st it is the consecrated day,
The anniversary of that which brought
Death on *my* home.—'Twas such an eve as this,
So soft, so calm, that, sixteen summers since,
Usher'd that bloodiest morn. Even now, I feel
Hot on my flesh, the fretting of the chains
Montalbert lock'd about me! Even now,
The same devouring fever kindles here,
(striking his head)
That madden'd me, when I beheld my child
Seiz'd by his ruffians—saw my darling wife,
The gracious daughter of a line of kings,
Murder'd before mine eyes!—No more, no more,
Or in the whirl of my distemper'd brain,
The great revenge I seek will be forgot,
And my heart burst too soon!—Gods of our land,
Let him but see his bride, like mine, made captive,
And sacrificed by me, as mine by him——
Then, in whatever shape of bitter death,
Or bitterer life, it please ye cast my lot,
Body and soul I give myself unto you,
A martyr—but a conqueror! [*Exit.*

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Before the French fortress, a woody scene.

OMREAH *enters cautiously, and is met by* LOGAMAH.

Log. Prince Omreah!
So near the hostile fort?
Omr. My warriors wind
Among these woods to gain the northward pass,
Which leads to Maloch's tent; while I, alone
And unobserved, creep close upon the fort;
Seeing, unseen, what point of its defence
Is best assailable.
Log. Our tribe's suspected.
My brother Carbal, for his interview
With England's officers at Guadaloupe,
Has been arrested; and at dawn to-morrow
Must suffer death——
Omr. Must suffer death! The sacred
Hereditary servant of our gods!
Such sacrifice will only heat our warriors
To fiercer fury. Was he mad, to treat
With Europeans?—he deserves his fate.
Log. But for the aid *he* has secured from England,

Our enterprize were vain.

Omr. I thank you, friend,
That I am timely warn'd of this alliance:
If I assist the attack, it shall be made
Before the hateful sons of Europe come
To share our glory, or to thwart our justice!

Log. Soft! a French guard draws near: we must divide——

Omr. Take thou the rocky path; I will observe
Their movements from this thicket: in an hour
We'll meet at Maloch's tent.

[*Exit* LOGAMAH. OMREAH *conceals himself in a thicket.*

Enter D'ARCY *and Soldiers, meeting* COLMAR, *who is followed by* KATHELRADE.

Col. D'Arcy, well met.
Our tasks are not completed: with each hour
The danger grows upon us. We have news
That this dread Carib prince o' the south, Omreah,
For whose rebellious head we have, in vain,
Proclaim'd so great reward, has left his hills,
And marches hither.

Kath. Hearest thou these dangers,—
Know'st thou the terror of Omreah's arms,—
And yet wilt slay my son, my guiltless Carbal,
The lightest breathing of whose holy voice,
Could swell, or still the storm?

Col. Peace, woman, peace!——
D'Arcy, select a guard: hasten to Maloch,
Our old ally: dwell on the perilous treason,

Whereof his priest, young Carbal, stands convicted:
Flatter his pride—play on his subtle nature,
And tell him, if he would preserve our friendship,
And wipe the stain of treachery from his tribe,
He must, o' the instant, raise his northern warriors,
And march them to our aid, by break of day.
D'Arcy. I shall not fail.
Col. King Maloch's tents are scarce
A short league hence: Before the midnight bell,
I look to see you at the fort again.
The watch word is, Defend.
[*Exeunt* D'Arcy *and Soldiers.*
Kath. Defend,—'tis apt——
For a wrong'd mother's curse is on your heads.
Oh, murderers! were Montalbert here, your tongues
Had fester'd ere they had presumed to utter
The death-doom of my son!
Col. Montalbert knows
Thy Carbal's guilt.
Kath. 'Tis false! he is *not* guilty!
Col. Nay more; Montalbert's lips pronounced the judgment,
That he should die at dawn.
Kath. I'll not believe it!
His judgment—Be it so: I am justly punish'd!
I was the bond-slave of Montalbert's mother;
My breast gave suck to him: still, as he grew,
I lov'd him as my own: He turned his arms
Against my hapless country: all my race
Cursed him; but I was faithful. To this hour
I've loved him still: and he rewards me now

By the foul murder of my son, the stay
Of my lone widowhood. Oh, mercy, mercy!
Is there no way to save him?
Col. 'Tis decreed. [*Going.*
Kath. A moment—
Col. Pity struggles against justice;
I must be gone: Omreah is in force,
And active duties call me. Fare thee well:
And if thou can'st, be patient. [*Exit.*
Kath. Patient, say'st thou!
Patient to-night, when my son dies at morning!
May heaven's swift justice overtake Montalbert,
For this last blackest sin! Montalbert, thee—
And all the offspring of usurping Europe!
Omr. *(stealing forward.)* The metal glows to a red heat; 'tis now
That we may fashion it.
Kath. Come thick upon him
Trouble, alarm, and peril! press him down,
Ye English foes, that humble France and him!
And thou, Omreah, kindred of my race,
Whose very name makes pale his officers,
And scares them thus to cry abroad for help,
Come on, ere help arrive: rush on the fort,
While yet but half prepared, and in the tumult
Unlock the fetters of my wretched son!
Omr. What would you venture, Kathelrade, for this?
Kath. Who art thou, that dost ask me?
Omr. He your prayers
Demanded. After sixteen years, you look
Once more upon Omreah.
Kath. Does my sight
Deceive me? or do I indeed behold

Him who has suffered, from this fell Montalbert,
Wrongs only less than mine?
Omr. Thou art an Indian,
Whose land white men have ravaged: thou'rt a mother,
Whose son, e'en now a white man means to slay:
So stung, wilt thou be patient, till the blow
Fall irremediable, or wilt thou rather
Advance a purpose that shall right thy country,
And save thy son from death?
Kath. Shew but the way,
And let my wrongs be pledges for my faith!
Omr. Then on what errand are those soldiers sent,
Who parted hence but now?
Kath. To Maloch's quarter,
To levy aids against thy fear'd approach.
Omr. And when return they to the fort?
Kath. Ere midnight.
Omr. 'Tis well—'Tis well—their watchword is——
Kath. "Defend."
Omr. Enough: you've sworn——
Kath. I have: what wouldst thou more?
Omr. The time cuts off all further parley now:
Wait in the outer court-yard of the fortress,
At ten to-night, firm in the faith you've pledg'd;
Then shall you know the rest, and see your son
Restored to liberty. Now we shall need
No English aids. *(going.)*
Kath. 'Tis heaven that interposes,
To save my son, its holy minister!
Omr. (returning.) How many are the centinels that guard

The outer gates?
Kath. But two——
Omr. Ply them with drink:
And drug their goblets with such sleepy herbs
As best may lull the senses. Note my words,
And fare thee well. [*Exit.*
Kath. Do but preserve my son,
And to the last you shall command his mother!
[*Exit.*

SCENE II.

A grassy space; sunset over the sea.

Enter CLAUDINA, MARIAN, *and French soldiers.*

Clau. How distant are we, soldiers, from your fort?—
Sold. Scarce a short mile.
Clau. It is a lovely sunset;
The evening breeze from land blows healthfully
Over my fever'd cheek; and as it cools
The scented turf, a thousand odours breathe
Freshly upon the sense.
Sold. Aye, gentle lady,
You'd little guess, to see these mossy tufts
That spring so green, how few short summers past,
The ground we tread upon lay crimson'd deep,

With human gore!
Clau. My soul grows chill within me!
What place is this?
Sold. The field where, two years since,
My lord Montalbert overthrew the English.
Clau. Here then Trefusis met his fate?
Sold. Even so:
We sought his body, when the fight was over;
But dust, and smearing wounds baffling our search,
We made one general grave for all the slain,
Where yonder little hillock swells.
(He points to the spot.
Clau. Good friend,
Go slowly forward; I will follow straight.
Mar. Madam, the path——
Clau. Is easy—I shall find it:
I will but pause a moment—dearest Marian ——
Nay, I entreat you, grant me this request.
[MARIAN *and Soldiers retire.*
Clau. Now, now, Trefusis, dear lost lord of all
My bosom's tenderness! uncheck'd, unwitness'd,
I may pour forth the gushing tears that choke me,
And breathe unto thy memory my sighs
Of grief, and love eternal.

TREFUSIS *enters, and looks around; but does not at first perceive* CLAUDINA.

Tre. I have foil'd
These hot-pursuing French; but my poor Carbal
Remains their prisoner. This should be my path,

Tow'rd Maloch's tents:—Too well do I remember
The fatal ground I tread!

Clau. (Whose face is averted from the side by which TREFUSIS *has entered.)*

Oh pardon me,
Montalbert, if I wrong my wedded faith
So far, to take this last, last, cold farewell
Of my Trefusis, my affianced husband!
But this one sad indulgence! but this once
For all my griefs! Upon my bended knees
Thus let me cleave unto the hallowed earth
That doth enshrine him, call on his loved spirit,
And weep my soul away!

[CLAUDINA *throws herself exhausted on the supposed grave of* TREFUSIS, *who, during the latter part of the preceding speech, has perceived, and anxiously listened to her.*]

Tre. It is, it is——
My own adored Claudina!—Rise, sweet mourner,
Lean on this faithful breast, and rest thee here.

Clau. (wildly.) What voice is this, that mocks my ear, as if
The stern and silent grave that hides him from me,
Should yield him back to life and speech again!

Tre. Was I so lov'd, then, only so to lose her?
Accursed treachery!

Clau. I am wandering!
'Tis but the echo from my own sad heart,
That wilder'd with a strange and sorrowful dream
Over his grave, thus cheats my weary sense,
Waking fantastic sounds!

Tre. Look up and bless me,
My love, my wife!
Clau. Oh, speak that word again——
Call me again your wife! let me be sure
It is no phantom breathes this music to me,
But my true lord, that lives, and moves, and speaks,
And claims me for his own!
Tre. It is, indeed!
Gaze on me, dearest, still, and let me drink
The light of those sweet looks!—why dost thou start
So wildly from me? Once again I tell thee,
'Tis no unreal vision.
Clau. Would it were!
Oh would my aching sight could think it still
Unreal!—loose me!—nay, I do beseech,
Command you, loose me!
Tre. How have I offended,
That I am grown thus hateful to Claudina?
Clau. Oh no! you are all goodness still—'tis I,
Who in an evil moment——
Tre. I would spare you
The painful tale, Claudina:—yes, I know,
You are married to Montalbert!
Clau. Can it be,
You are informed how deeply I have wrong'd you,
And yet speak to me in such gentle accents?
Tre. Too well I know the treacherous arts that gain'd you,
The forged report of my untimely death,
By which we are made wretched!
Clau. Forged report!
Oh—forged by whom?
Tre. By thy false husband, lady!

Clau. Montalbert!
Tre. Aye, by him!
Clau. Then heaven forgive him,
The darkest, deepest, cruellest deceit
That ever braved perdition.—But twelve days!
Oh had we met twelve little days before,
We had been happy! Thankless that I am,
Is it not happiness enough for me
To know you live?
Tre. I do but live in vain,
Since not for you!
Clau. Strange thoughts flock fast upon me.
Why art thou here? where hast thou tarried from me
So long? How cam'st thou hither? Oh, make haste
To leave these fatal precincts: should my lord
Approach, we're both undone!
Tre. 'Tis well admonish'd!
This sad encounter had almost effaced
The memory of what I came to do.
Clau. Your looks are terrible! what is't you purpose?
For generous pity——
Tre. Turn those eyes away,
Lest their soft influence quite relax the strength
Of my wrought nerves, and melt me to a coward.
Clau. What would you do?
Tre. Preserve a life that's dearer
Than the rich centre of this new found world,
Whose dust is gold.
Clau. *My* life! I understand.—
You're sent by England to pursue the blow
That drove our vanquish'd force from Guadaloupe.——

Oh! after this long parting, are you come
At last as the invader of the land
That gives *me* shelter? Silent?—then my fears
Speak but too true. You have surprised the fort?
Tre. (*taking her hand.*) 'Twere treason should
I tell you more.—Fly, fly,
And let me save you!
Clau. Never! I can feel
The wrong Montalbert has inflicted on me;
But I am still his wife, and in the hour
Of grief and peril, I will not desert him.
Tre. Generous Claudina! will no prayers engage you
To ward the dangers that beset yourself?
Clau. I care not for my life; but, while it lasts,
It shall be faithful to the sacred duties
For which heaven gave it.
Tre. There is yet a way!
Beneath the northern turret of your fort
A hidden chamber lies, known but to few
Ev'n of your garrison: learn from Montalbert
The passage thither, and, when danger threatens,
Fly to that shelter. But, I pray you, breathe
No hint of this my warning—Should you put
The French upon their guard, my life and fame
Would pay the forfeit of my fond disclosure.
Clau. My heart may break—but never shall betray you! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

MALOCH'S *tent.*

Wild music.

Enter MALOCH, *and* LOGAMAH *conversing, preceded by Caribs.*

Log. At break of day he dies.
Mal. Unhappy Carbal!
I ever fear'd a danger from his zeal
To join these English with us: He has haunted
The tents of Europeans, 'till his heart
Forgets to hate them. Not that I would have
This shew of friendship with the English, thrown
Aside as yet. Trefusis, Carbal's friend,
May for awhile be useful.
Log. He arrives.

Enter TREFUSIS.

Mal. You're welcome, European, from the durance
Wherein Montalbert has so long detained you.
Tre. Hail to king Maloch!
Mal. Carbal's late detention
Must be redress'd. Omreah will assist us

To plan the needful measures of attack;
And though we chance to find him harsh of speech,
And ill inclined to European friendships,
We must bear with him.
Tre. I have heard his history,
And will not quarrel with the rage that heats
His deeply injured spirit. [*Shouts behind.*
Tre. Hark! what shouts
Of gladness rend the air?
Mal. Omreah comes;
And snuffing at the sport, like hounds of proof,
Our warriors yell their joy.

Enter OMREAH, *followed by* BRANCHO, *and Caribs.*

Omr. Brother, well met in such a cause—though late.
Mal. Believe me, prince,
If I have not with earlier haste adventured
In the just quarrel we have now engaged to,
No slavish fear repress'd me, nor the weakness
Of tardy age; but long experience, teaching
To wait occasion: that the blow, as now,
Being struck upon a weaken'd enemy,
Might do its work at once.—You have survey'd
Their strength: how stand they?
Omr. You shall better learn
From certain messengers of theirs, whose course
I have with pains outrun; upon my risk
Make prisoners of them all: the moment presses,

For lo, they come; I'll answer 't when 'tis done.

Enter D'ARCY, *and French soldiers.*

D'Arcy. How now?—what means this throng of armed men?

Mal. Hast thou not heard Omreah's force is up?
'Twas fit we arm'd to meet him.

D'Arcy. Why, well spoken:
And therefore I have sought you, to request,
As you would keep our customed amity,
That, with such force as you can raise o' the instant,
You join our garrison ere break of day.

Mal. We shall be duly there.

D'Arcy. This welcome answer
Shall straightway be returned. [*Going.*

Omr. Less hurry, sir;
Evening begins to close: The dews are damp,
And, lest they chance to chill you, 'twill be fit
You rest you here to-night. You are our prisoners.

[*Meanwhile* OMREAH'S *attendants have been surrounding* D'ARCY *and the French soldiers with a guard of Caribs; and, as* OMREAH *concludes, the French party are made prisoners.*]

Omr. At last, the work begins:—to it, and prosper!

D'Arcy. What snare is this?

Omr. One that may lime, ere long,
A bird of stronger wing. Lead them apart;

And strip from each his armour and his habit.
[*Exeunt Caribs, and French soldiers prisoners.*
I, and some certain of my warriors, must
Assume the arms and covering of these French:
And, cloak'd in that disguise, speed through the dusk
Unto their fort. The watchword is, "Defend,"
Which, being whisper'd to the drowsy sentinel,
We gain the fort within—
Mal. What is't you purpose?
Omr. There waits a guide, whose woman's heart a sting
Keeps vigilant—the mother of your Carbal:
She will conduct our steps, where we may crouch
Till sleep has made all quiet: then spring forth,
Strike down the guard, and throwing wide the gates,
Let in your stormy multitude. The cloak
And sword!—Come, bring them in!
[*Re-enter Caribs, with the cloaks and arms of the French soldiers.*]
Tre. It is a masque,
Bespeaking bloody revel!
Mal. Your device
Is hasty, prince.
Omr. I meant it should be so,
That we may not require your English friends
From Guadaloupe. Would ye be fools, and fight,
Faint, bleed, in working off one master's yoke,
To let another grind you?
Tre. Calmly, warrior;
Temper the splenetic courage, that sits on you

So proud and wanton, and take heed in time
What precipice it spurs to.
Omr. (turning suddenly round.) What art thou?
A white man!—Why, I know thee then; and knowing,
I hate and spurn thee.
Tre. I am slow to anger,
Were this a time for discord; but the hour
Calls for close fellowship: and he amongst us
That stirs a finger out of concert now,
Loses his cause and country!
Mal. He says well;
And has a voice in this our enterprize,
As potent as our own.
Omr. Is't so? A white man
Associate in command? Why then, farewell!
Call off my forces!—call them off!—I'll make
No league with such confederates. Let their fort
Remain: I can defy their puny children
In my wild glens, old nature's fortresses,
Where they would quake to climb.
Mal. Be patient, chief!
By his assistance——
Omr. Why was I deceived?
You knew, had such a partner been proposed,
I should have scorn'd your league!
Tre. Our common object
Is to destroy our common enemy,
And set our Carbal free. Your stratagem
Bids fair, and you shall find no jealousy
Thwart its accomplishment.
Mal. How says Omreah?

Omr. Is it a natural hate that sets these white men
At one another's throats?—Out! out! decoys,
To sell us to our foe.
Mal. You are too sudden:
What's to be done?
Omr. Do as you list, I care not.
Mal. (aside, to TRE.*)* Your presence ruffles him: if you will leave us,
He may be led more aptly. *(Aloud.)* Be your task,
To post our warriors for the assault, without
The fort, and watch the unclosing of the gates.
Tre. Let me have cautious comrades—
Omr. Give him safe ones,
Who if the cloak of 's honesty should slip
A rent, will make so bold to gather it
Up with a dagger's point.
Mal. Here is your guide.
[*Presenting one of the Caribs.*
Tre. I will make haste to seek some covert ground,
Where, in safe readiness, my valiant band
May wait Omreah's signal for the assault.
If I come safely off, we shall again,
Ere midnight, change a greeting by the blaze
O' the enemy's fort: if I am doom'd to fall,
There is no quarry death can strike more apt,
When all the sweetness I had wish'd to live for,
Blesses another's lip. [*Exit with Caribs.*
Mal. Just spirits aid you!
Omr. Let him go! venture! perish! Where's the matter,
If, for the myriads of our brethren murder'd
To glut the European throats with gore,

One white man die to profit *us*?—One die!—
Why should one live!—To spawn in our warm sun,
To taint the free air of our isle, and hiss
His green infections on us, whose rank crest
We have the strength to crush?

Mal. Is my fair show
Put on so well, that it deceives Omreah?
Like you, I loathe them all: like you, I groan
For sweet revenge; but mean to take it wisely:
For age, and the example of our tyrants,
Have taught me, to give hate its way no further
Than interest travels with it.

Omr. Cry you mercy!
I'm of a downright temper, and unvers'd
In politic turns.

Mal. It were not safe, thus early
To drop the guise of friendship: should we fail
In this attempt to-night, our only refuge
Would be the English aids from Guadaloupe.
Therefore be wary yet: lull this Trefusis
With cordial seeming: second him i' the fight,
As you shall find his skill and hardihood
Worthily bear you out; and let revenge,
Which is the wise man's servant, not his master,
Wait for its turn, and check its thirsty lip,
Till safety pledge the draught.

Omr. I will not do it:
You, if you will, may wear a double face;
For you've so long been leagued with these deceivers,
Taking their stamp, speech, customs, arts, and seemings,
(As might indeed behove their subject king,)
That you can play the traitor, as if born to't:

But I, whose only converse with their tribe
Has been disgrace and torture—I, with whom
They never used more kind interpreter
Than ruthless force, the fetter, and the scourge—
I will not palter with my honest hate,
By stooping, even in show, to treat with bandits,
Whom my mind scorns, as my free heart abhors them!

Mal. Nay, use your pleasure.

Omr. I have none but vengeance.

[*Turns up the stage.*

Enter a Carib messenger, who speaks aside to MALOCH.

Mal. Be patient, and that vengeance is your own:
For here is one with tidings, that Montalbert,
The cause of all your wrongs, is with his bride
Come to the Headland, and this very night
Sleeps in the fort.—Now, will Omreah quit
The league we've made?

Omr. (*turning round, and rushing forward.*)
Come with his bride?—what here,
In Dominica?—This was what I pray'd for!—
In person!—But shall I be sure of him?
Shall I be sure, that when I have him down,
No white allies shall interpose betwixt
Me and my prize,—to enforce for one another
That civilized, that christian law of mercy,
Our dusky children never yet partook?

Mal. You shall be satisfied.

Omr. By heaven, I will!
Where is the daughter of my youthful strength,

My little smiling daughter? Did they spare
Her harmless infancy? Where is my wife?
Was she spared to me, when Montalbert's ruffians
Swept like a hurricane o'er these summer isles,
And blasted all my race?—*His* wife is come!
Let him look to her!—a new married wife,
Not cold yet in his love! Let him look to her;
For the fierce sun, that lights to-morrow's sky,
Shall shew her for the last time to his eyes
A lifeless body! Up, ye hardy spirits
That own me for your leader!—whet your fangs,
And follow while I cheer you to a prey
Shall flesh them deep—Break up, I say, and follow! [*Exeunt.*

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

SCENE I.

A quadrangle within the fort, surrounded by cloisters.

Enter KATHELRADE, *ushering in* OMREAH, LOGAMAH, *and several Caribs, in the disguise of French soldiers.*

Omr. We're safe; the watch suspect us not.
Kath. Omreah,
I half repent me. 'Tis a bloody purpose,
And if you ope the gates——
Omr. Amid the tumult
Your son escapes: if not, he perishes;
That's all.—No more: we trifle. Is it time?
Kath. Not yet: the twinkling lights that still appear
Across the court-yard from the upper casements,
Shew there remain some watchers. I must bring you
To the accustom'd quarters of those soldiers
Whom you thus personate.
Omr. They're safely stow'd:
They'll not reclaim their lodging.
Kath. Get you in.
[*Exeunt* LOGAMAH *and Caribs.* *The firing of guns is heard.*

Omr. What's this? Am I betray'd?
(grasping her wrist.)
Kath. Release me.
Omr. Whither
Would you depart?
Kath. To seek Montalbert. Listen—
Those guns announce his coming.
Omr. He is welcome.——
At last my foe is given into my hand!

MONTALBERT *crosses the cloisters, with* COLMAR.

Aye! there he passes! sixteen years have wrought
But little change in him. I feel his presence
Upon my breast, as if a reptile crawl'd
Athwart the shrinking flesh.
Kath. (endeavouring to pass OMREAH.) He may relent—
He may repair my wrongs.
Omr. Is this the hate,
Vow'd everlasting?—this the unquenchable
And deadly flame of injured woman's rage?
Can he repair *my* wrongs? Can he repair
The wrongs of our dear country? Nay, 'tis vain
To struggle thus.
Kath. Let me but see him once,
And try his mercy.—Set me free, I say!
Or with my cries I'll wake the garrison,
And yield you prisoner.
Omr. If one sound escape thee,
'Tis thine own death-note—aye, and Carbal's too!
(drawing his dagger.)
Kath. Thy looks and words have more than human horror!

Omr. Logamah! lead that wayward woman hence,
And keep her with you, safe, and silent too,
Until the signal of this horn awake
The echoes of the fort.

LOGAMAH *re-enters, and takes* KATHELRADE *by the hand.*

Kath. Remorse and terror
Possess me wholly.—Was there no redemption
For the son's life, but in the mother's treason?
Oh, Carbal! I have sear'd my heart to save thee!
[*Exit, with* LOGOMAH.

Omr. Why then
I'll not delay: her soul-sick fantasies
May rise again, and strangle our attempt.
The lights have disappear'd: the fort is quiet:
Let me but view these courts, and their defence,
Then wake the blast of death! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

MONTALBERT'S *apartment in the fort.*

Enter MONTALBERT *with a map.* COLMAR *attending.*

Mont. Here, take the map,
And in the morning let our men begin
The reparations I have noted there.
[*Exit* COLMAR.

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The Caribs gather strength: The English threaten:
And these redoubts, half weatherworn, afford
A frail defence. Such are the auspices
Of my long-courted wedlock, which to compass,
I have reached so far in guilt. From his deep cell
The curses of Trefusis seem to rise,
And vindicate the bride, whom but her faith
In my suggestion of his death has drawn
Unwilling to my arms.—My gentle wife!

Enter CLAUDINA.

Clau. Your wife in name, yet not indeed your wife.
Mont. You wander, love: fatigue has overcome you.
Clau. Not so, my lord: a witness is alive,
Who but too quickly may confirm the truth
Of what I speak:—Trefusis may confirm it!
Mont. What sayst thou?
Clau. Start not: they that have been buried
Are not the dead alone.—You are confused—
Confused, my lord, and shun your wife's observance.—
Fatal deceit, that plucks from wedded love
Its fairest grace and flow'r, sweet confidence,
Abashing the clear front of blushing honour,
To vouch a falsehood! I repeat, Trefusis
Alive, and bent on vengeance!
Mont. Who has seen him?
Clau. I have, and talked with him, and learnt from him
All *you* would hide.

Mont. Then Carbal *has* betrayed me!
Clau. Dost *thou* complain of that? thou, that art worst,
Of all betrayers! with what new device
Wilt thou acquit thee of thy treachery
To me, and to my own betrothed lord?
Mont. Hast thou then no forgiveness for a fault,
Which love of thee has prompted?
Clau. Love of me!
Love without truth! Oh, do not so profane
The sacred name. Love knows no dark deceit,
No frozen, false reserve—In love's communion,
Heart beats to heart, and soul to soul transfused,
As meeting rivulets, in whose pure confluence
Each lucid drop commingles!
Mont. If my life,
Through all its future years devoted only
To confidence and thee, might yet repair
One only crime, and win thy heart again—
Clau. Banish the hope! my hand thou dost possess,
For thou hast gained it from me by a fraud:
But not thy sum of years can ever win thee
That heart which thou hast stabb'd; nor stifle here
The hapless, hopeless love, which thou thyself
Didst pledge to my true lord!
Mont. There's no reproach
For the deceit by which I have undone thee,
But finds an answering pang within my breast,
Of deep sincere repentance.
Clau. What avails it?
If with thy floods of tears thou couldst wash out
All trace of memory, or dissolve the bonds,
The unhallow'd bonds, that knit our fates together,

There were a virtue in thy penitence—
Nay, could'st thou turn aside the punishment,
Which heav'n but now sends down on thee and thine,
Through him whom thou hast wrong'd——
Mont. Vain threats, Claudina.
Clau. Nay, I speak true.—yet what I speak, I know not.
Mont. Explain.
Clau. I may not, cannot tell thee more——
[OMREAH'S *horn is heard without.*
There—there it comes!
Mont. Trust me, some weak imposture.
[*The horn is again heard.*
Again! what shouts are these?
[*The Caribs' yell is heard without.*
Clau. Oh, fly with me
To the sunk chamber, which, I'm told, extends
Beneath the northern turret.—
Mont. Your Trefusis
Counsell'd you this! what, he would brand my fame
With flight! No! it shall shelter thee; but I,
Whate'er the shock, will brave it.
Clau. Quickly, then,
Or all is lost!
[*Exit* CLAUDINA. MONTALBERT *turns, on hearing the voice of* COLMAR *behind him.*
Colm. (without.) General, defend your life.
Mont. I am prepared.

COLMAR *enters.*

Now, which way lies the danger?
Colm. The fort's in flames: a sudden enemy
Has forced the gates.

Mont. Who are the foes? The English
From Guadaloupe?
Colm. The Caribs: and Omreah
Their leader!—in they pour, by the red light,
In many a dusky swarm, blackening the fort!
Mont. Conduct my wife to the recess, beneath
The northern tow'r—I'll give the rallying word,
France, and the King!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Before the fort. The fort on fire. Battle.

Enter KATHELRADE, CARBAL, *and* LOGAMAH.

Kath. Didst thou in sooth then plot
The treason, from whose penalty thy mother
Has dared so much to save thee?
Car. Yes; if truly
It be a treason to assist my country
Against a foreign tyrant. You, my mother,
Are guilty of like treason, in preserving
Your death-devoted son.
Kath. 'Tis but too true:
For your deliverance, I have sacrificed
One hardly less beloved—my foster-son,
My lord and master.

[*Skirmish. Drums and trumpets.*

Car. Lo! the battle thickens:
Bear we our mother to some safer spot.
Log. She is secure. Montalbert has commended

His foster parent to the especial care
Of all his followers,—marry, little guessing,
How much he owes her.
Kath. Were his thoughts so kind
To his betrayer? Shall I fly to him,
Confess my treach'ry, and implore his pardon?
No; he will not believe, the breast that nurs'd him
Could have been steel'd to such a hard extreme!
Car. Live for your country, and your sons, and banish
The thought of him who was the foe of all.
Kath. Yet I will seek, and speak to him, and tell him
All I have done and suffer'd—oh for power
To rescue him, as I have rescued you!
[*As she is going,* CARBAL *attempts to withhold her.*]
Your leave—The war that shakes yon battlements
Is peace to that within my burning heart——
I will not be detain'd. [*Exit.*
Car. Ever extreme
In love, as hate! This is an extasy,
May need our watching. [*Exeunt.*

[*The flames ascend. Part of the fort is heard to fall in. Shouts, martial music, and the clashing of weapons.*]

Enter MALOCH, *from among the fortifications.*

Mal. The assault has stirred me.
This arm, unshrunk, albeit for many a year
Disused from blood, rejoices in its strength,

And longs for fresh encounter. Now, Trefusis,
How fare their boasted bulwarks?

Enter TREFUSIS.

Tre. All's in flame.
Our wild troops, dashing through the smoke, hunt down
Th' astonish'd French; and mingling with the roar
Of crackling fire, Omreah's merciless yell
Comes thundering hoarse, as drunkenly he plies
His sword in their best blood.
Mal. Where fights Montalbert?
Tre. At yonder portal, with some thirty followers:
The rest, with desp'rate energy, defend
The northern tow'r, the only point that's proof
Against the spreading fire. To gain that tow'r
I've cut my way thus far. [*Exit.*
Mal. No doubt the bride,
For whom Montalbert shut him from the world,
Is placed within its walls. Why, be it so.
It is by private springs, the public engine
Works to advantage. All but that one pile,
Thanks to Omreah's stratagem, we've gain'd,
Without the English guns.

Enter MONTALBERT.

Mont. It is in vain
To rally my dishearten'd fugitives:
I can but seek the tow'r that yet holds out,
And perish in its ruins.

Mal. Turn, Montalbert,
And perish here!
Mont. Thou subtle traitor, hence!
Thou, on whose aid our confidence relied,
Ev'n as upon a brother's;—dost thou face me?
Mal. Fool! that couldst hope assistance in thy need,
From forced allies, and take our fear for friendship,
If thou hast yet so much of hope in thee,
To think thy life worth struggling for, defend it.
Mont. Nay then, commend thee to the gods thou serv'st,
For thy last hour draws near.
[*They fight.* MALOCH *falls.*
Mal. Why did I arm
In this too sudden quarrel? Thou prevail'st,
Usurper! but there comes a comfort yet;—

Enter OMREAH.

For this my brother will not let my bones
Bleach to the scorching sunbeam, unrefresh'd
With my destroyer's blood. [*Dies.*
Omr. I need no spur
To vindicate thy death! For my own wrongs,
Wrongs all too countless for my tongue to speak,
Boil in my blood, and thus I spring upon him!
Mont. Hold off thy hand! sure I should know thine aspect!
Omr. Thou should'st, indeed; for not a feature here,
But in its pale and careworn lineaments
Bears damning trace of thee!

Mont. Hear me, Omreah:
I fain would spare——
Omr. No parley!—there was none
When thou didst swoop upon my peaceful realm,
With faulchion, and with flame! I'll have no respite!
[*They fight:* MONTALBERT *strikes the sword out of* OMREAH'S *hand.*
Mont. Now, savage, wilt thou sue for terms?
Omr. (*Leaping upon* MONTALBERT, *snatching his sword, and bringing him upon one knee,*) Nor grant them—
For I have made thee sure!
[*He stands over* MONTALBERT.

Enter CARBAL, LOGAMAH, BRANCHO, *and Caribs.*

Applaud me, warriors!
For lo, my arm has overcome Montalbert—
The head, the spring of all our country's woes,
The dread Montalbert! Priests, draw near, and curse
The slayer of your king!
Carb. The king!—alas!
[*Perceiving the body of* MALOCH.]
Raise and give due observance to the body.
Omr. Aye, we will solemnize its obsequies
With fitting honours. Here's my offering,
The blood, that on the altar of the dead
Shall make the wholesom'st savour.
[*The body of* MALOCH *is lifted.*
Mont. If yon sword
Were in my grasp again, that I might have
Some partner in my death——

Omr. Why, so thou shalt;
Think'st thou I mean, so early in thy wedlock,
To part the bridegroom from the bride?
Mont. My bride!
Shall not her innocent life be sacred to you!
Omr. I have sent to seek her for thee. It is ever
Our custom, European, when we seize
A prisoner in our wars, to give his manhood
The fair occasion to approve itself,
In varied sufferance of our cunning'st tortures:
And (for I would not have it thought, the prisoner
On whom I build my glory, is but nerv'd
Like common men,) I will illustrate thee
With more than common penance: I will try
How well thy fortitude will bear the groans
Of her thou doat'st upon, as she receives
Her fate before thine eyes.
Mont. From what fell demon
Learn'dst thou this damned subtlety of torture?
Omr. It is in thee I hail my great instructor!
From thee I had it all!—and if it give
Thy breast but half that deep devouring anguish,
Which, to my shame, too much has shaken me,
The restless spirits of my wife and babe
Will have been well revenged. Lead him away,
And keep strict watch upon him.
Log. To the tow'r,
Where we have chain'd the rest o' the prisoners?
Omr. To whatsoever den affords most safety.
Look you to that; for if he break his bonds,
Your lives shall answer it.

[*Exit* MONTALBERT, *guarded.*

Omr. Now for the tow'r,
Where, as it seems, this bride, through whom my vengeance
Must be fulfill'd upon him, has been placed
For safety. On them, my brave people! on them!
Make no more prisoners, but let ravage loose,
For the avenging gods have given this night
To your long craving, that without remorse
You may strike home, strike deep, make sure, and spare not! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

The vault under the northern tower; CLAUDINA *alone.*

Clau. Oh, what an hour has pass'd! Each crash, each cry
Shoots to my heart! In all events I'm wretched.
Montalbert's victory, is Trefusis' death—
And if Trefusis conquer, where's the hope
Of mercy for my husband—my betrayer,
Yet still my benefactor!—Soft, the noise
Ceases! This silence is more dreadful yet:
It is the calm of death!

Enter TREFUSIS.

Tre. Justice has triumph'd;
And you, beloved Claudina——
Clau. Is Montalbert
Alive?
Tre. As yet he is.
Clau. Then he is safe!
You will not harm an unresisting captive?
Tre. And yet I would not stand that captive's hazard
For his whole nation's wealth.
Clau. Hear me, Trefusis——
[TREFUSIS *turns away.*
He is my husband;—hear me but a moment—
I know it—you've been wrong'd—but he's my husband——
Tre. And therefore is a traitor—is he not?
In the near'st point, a false, abandon'd traitor,
Whose punishment will set you free.
Clau. Oh, horror!
Trefusis—if, as my fond heart once dream'd,
You've loved me truly, by that influence
I pray—nay, on my knees I thus adjure you,
Ev'n though for him you have no pity, yet
Have mercy upon me, his wretched wife!—
Will set me free! what, make a wife the cause
And accessary in her husband's murder!
No, no, you will not whelm that guilt upon me,
That deep, condemn'd remorse!
Tre. I have no tongue

To vent the struggles of my passionate heart,
And give it ease. Claudina! though those tears
Are pour'd for one who has most injured me;—
Nay, though his death would make thee mine
once more—
I will not harm thy husband!
Clau. Blessings on thee!
Tre. The only hope is in escape.
Clau. Oh, yes!
I will console his flight, will follow him
In banishment and sorrow, to repay
The debt I owe him, and repair the harshness
Of my too sharp reproaches.
Tre. I will strive
To aid the virtue which I fain would copy.
Through every corner of the tow'r that stands
Above these vaults, Omreah at this instant
Is seeking you; but these retreats will mock
His search. When he departs, the Indian priest,
Carbal, in whom I trust, shall guide your path
To that same cave on the sea-side, where late
I was imprisoned.
Clau. But, Montalbert—what
Shall be devised for him?
Tre. Be that my care;
I can, on my authority as leader
Of Maloch's warriors, change his guard, and
speed him
To the North Headland, where with you this
morning
He came on shore. Thence, by the coast, he soon
May row the boat that brought you, to the cave,
Where you will wait his coming; and from which
To Martinico, southerly, will be
A short day's voyage.

Clau. Faithful, much loved friend!
Nobly hast thou redeemed thy promise to me!
We part, 'tis like, for ever. The wide wastes
Of ocean will divide us: and I pray thee,
As we shall never, never meet again,
Strive thou, like me, to banish the remembrance
Of what has been; of thoughts, whose images,
Too dearly loved, must be indulged no more.
We must be firm; we must forget each other!
Tre. Forget! that word has more of anguish in it,
Than all we have endured! Forget, Claudina!
Clau. Yes, it must be. Fortune may ravish from us
All joys external; but it leaves us still
The godlike power to suffer, and to do,
As heav'n commands;—as thou hast done, Trefusis!

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

MONTALBERT'S *apartment in the fort.* MONTALBERT *fettered, walking backward and forward.*

Enter TREFUSIS.

Mont. (*not perceiving him.*) Death were to me
a boon; but for Claudina—
'Tis there I feel the pressure of my fate.
Trefusis!
Tre. Somewhat worn, perhaps, by years
Of drear captivity to great Montalbert;
Yet still that same Trefusis, whom, in days
Of happier note, while yet our hostile countries
Preserved the bond of peace, Montalbert loved
With friendship not unrecompens'd.
Mont. Thou dost
But plant another dagger in a heart
Already pierced to death.
Tre. Aye, that Trefusis,
Whom, not content to strip him of his freedom,
Thou hast despoil'd of more than life itself—
Of his betrothed wife!
Mont. Go on; go on—
I have deserv'd it all!
Tre. That same Trefusis,

Who, now that fortune leaves thy falling cause,
And thou thyself becom'st in turn a pris'ner,
Has sought thee thus, to reap a full revenge!
Mont. Thou canst not take my life so willingly
As I shall lose it. I have wrong'd—immur'd thee
Two tedious years.—Then strike. I will not shrink.
I have betray'd thy friendship—Still in doubt?
Nay, I have robb'd thee of thy love, Trefusis—
[TREFUSIS *half unsheaths his sword; but after a momentary struggle with himself, returns it to its scabbard.*]
Now, now, strike home, and search my heart!
Tre. I will,
Intrepid foe, but not with such a weapon,
As thou prepar'st for. 'Tis revenge enough
For me, to let thee know thy life and freedom
Are in my hand—that I restore them to thee—
That thy lov'd wife is sav'd to bless thy lot—
And that 'tis I have saved her!
Mont. Saved her, say you?
Is the command with you, and will you use it,
For my Claudina? Now you are indeed
Reveng'd! 'Twas fit I should be humbled thus,
Thus feel the virtue of the man I've wrong'd
Ascendant over me, and owe him more
Than life itself.
Tre. Rather owe all to her,
For whose dear sake this blow is warded from you.—
But your departure hence must be immediate,
Before Omreah guess it. Haste you straight
To the North Headland, where you left your bark,
And steer it down the coast to the same cave
Where I was prisoner. In that lone retreat,

Claudina is awaiting your arrival
To sail for Martinique. I have removed
Your guards; and in the darkness of the night
You'll gain the path securely.
Mont. I would thank you,
But want the voice. Yet, one thing more I need—
A trusty guide athwart these tangled glens
To the North Headland.

Enter KATHELRADE.

Kath. Is it here they guard
My foster son, my wrong'd Montalbert?
Mont. Com'st thou
To triumph in my fall? Oh, Kathelrade,
I knew the lot of war was made of strange
And fearful chances; but I deem'd that woman
Was faithful still.
Kath. I am—I am!—Could *I*
Have died ten thousand deaths, I'd not have spared them
In thy behalf—but my *son's* life depending
On my one word—how could a mother's voice
Withhold it?—Think of this, and you may yet
Forgive poor Kathelrade.
Mont. You time this aptly.
Inexorable justice would but ill
Become Montalbert now.
Tre. It is a wild
And wayward disposition. But she knows
Each mazy path o' th' island, and you need
A guide upon the sudden—May you trust her?

Kath. Oh yes! tell me but how to save or serve you,
And with my life I will redeem my crime.
Mont. I must accept her guidance, or abandon
All chance of flight, all hope of my Claudina.
Tre. Be circumspect; an English force will land
About this hour; and though with them your life
Would be secure, your liberty were hopeless.
No thanks, but on.
Mont. Farewell, my generous foe!
[*Exeunt* MONTALBERT *and* KATH.
Tre. This was indeed to my distracted heart
The sole revenge: for what extremity
Of harsh amends could have compensated
Such wrongs as mine, or brought to my relief,
Forgetfulness, or hope? [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

The Quandrangle in the fort.

Enter OMREAH, *and* CORBAL.

Omr. 'Twas in this tower,
Montalbert, as they say, conceal'd the women:
And I have sent for you, that, as we know not
The person of his wife, you may point out,
Among the female prisoners here assembled,
Which is Claudina.—Let the captives enter.
[*The female prisoners, and* MARIAN, *are brought in.*]

Unveil!—Now, priest——
Carb. Claudina is not here.
Omr. Not here! You play upon me! Look once more!
Not here?
Carb. I say, not here.
Omr. It is in vain
She strives to foil my search: If I beat up
Each thicket of the isle, she shall not 'scape me.
Send out our scouts to seek her; and let these,
And all the other captives who may come
Within your reach, be taken to the spot
Where we have stored the spoils, the spot adjoining
My tent, that I may have the earliest note
Of her detention. What's their number?—ten—
'Tis well: let them be presently brought in.
[*Exit.*
Mar. Alas! already, in this wild assault,
Claudina may have perish'd.
Carb. Fear not, Marian;
She's yet secure, within the secret chamber
Beneath this tow'r: where, had the time permitted,
You and these trembling women should have shar'd
Her hidden refuge. To my care Trefusis
Has trusted her, while he himself provides
Montalbert's safety. It is time to bring her
From her retreat: but, by our evil fortune,
The only passage to the cave wherein
I am to place her, is by that same tent
Whither Omreah has but now repair'd. [*Exit.*
Mar. Her griefs and dangers almost chase the thought
Of my own perils.

Re-enter CARBAL, *with* CLAUDINA.

Clau. Do we once again
Meet and embrace?
Carb. We must away.
Mar. But if,
To gain the cave you're bound to, you must pass
Omreah's tent, by what device propose you
To shun his lynx-eyed watch?
Carb. By your assistance.—
He has survey'd you all: has counted over
Your band, and is assured Montalbert's bride
Is not among these ten. Let her then take
Your station in the rank, and pass his tent
As one of those he has already view'd;
While, that the numbers may be still alike,
You shall remain behind.
Mar. Most joyfully.
Clau. Seek my own safety at my Marian's risk!
Oh, never!
Mar. I am not the more endanger'd,—
It is not my destruction they desire.
Do not reject this little aid.
Clau. My own
Too faithful Marian!
Carb. Marshal then your train,
And let us forward.—In the midst—even thus.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

OMREAH'S *tent. A rocky amphitheatre.*

Enter OMREAH *and* CARIBS.

Omr. There, where the winding rocks have made an inlet,
Place ye the spoils and prisoners, under guard.
Now, bring you tidings of my enemy's bride?

Enter BRANCHO.

Bra. I am assured that she was seen to enter
The tower Trefusis storm'd, the northern tower;
And, if not still conceal'd within its walls,
By his permission must have been releas'd.
Omr. Then, though the mystery of her strange concealment
Be buried in his heart, I'll dig it forth—

Enter TREFUSIS, *and Indians.*

Bra. These are the warriors who besieged the tow'r—
The secret lies among them.
Omr. Which of you
Has dared release my captive?
Tre. You may spare
Your threatening gestures, prince: for it is I
Have given Claudina liberty: which here

I do again, before the assembled host,
Proclaim and ratify.
Omr. By Maloch's soul,
I say, she dies, although a thousand white men,
All arm'd like thee, stood threatening at thy back,
To force her from me.
Tre. I am resolute
In what I have declared. Our arms have earn'd
Much spoil in common : of which prize I claim
No costly share for my reward, but only
That captive, whom at all risks I will keep.
Omr. What ! Is't for spoil that I have sold my blood ?
Blood for base ore, as you do ! I have girt
The sword upon my body for revenge,
And here it must be taken ! For yourself,
If your own life be dear, produce the captive ;
For her, as best becomes a duteous wife,
She shall partake her husband's speedy death,
In Maloch's funeral sacrifice.
Tre. Thou'rt foil'd,
Insatiate savage ! I have snatch'd the prey
From those curs'd fangs, and marr'd thy feast of blood :
And while thou ravs't, and lift'st thy clenched hands,
And mutterest inward blasphemies against
Thy impious gods, Montalbert, with his bride,
Spreads his free sail to ocean's morning wind,
And, safe beyond thy reach of malice, scorns
Thy threats and thee—as I do !
Omr. They are safe—
Safe are they, traitor?—Let them ! thou art left !—
Why stand you all like stocks, and fear to seize him ?

Hear you not, how his sacrilegious hand
Has freed the victim, destin'd to appease
The spirit of your loved, your murder'd king?
[*The Caribs seize and disarm* TREFUSIS.
Tre. (*struggling.*) What, like a felon! If thy savage nature,
That riots in the blood of enemies,
Fear not the shedding of thine own, release me,
And let our equal blows end manfully
Our equal quarrel.
Omr. What, release thee now,
A self-convicted traitor to our cause!
Is't thus that Europeans use to deal?
Tre. Yet pause ere you proceed! the setting stars
Fade from the waning night, and tell the approach
Of those who shall repay this wrong upon you,
With fearful reck'ning—the expected force
Of powerful England.
Omr. I will brave the hazard—

Enter CARBAL, *with* CLAUDINA, *and the captives.*

So, priest! you have engaged a hopeful comrade.
Car. A pris'ner! how is this? or what's his crime?
Omr. The rescue of Montalbert and his bride—
A crime against us all: against the spirits
Of your slain king, and of my murder'd mate
And innocent babe, to whom I owe the death
Of their destroyer's wife.
Clau. Would that atonement
Content thee?

Omr. Who is this?
Carb. (agitated.) One of the captives,
Whom you before examined in the tow'r.
Omr. Speak, woman! hast thou tidings of Claudina?
Tre. No; she deceives you: she can tell you nothing.
Clau. Hear me.
Omr. I will: there's something in thy face,
That strikes upon my soul, and seems to bring me
A lost reflection of departed thoughts,
And things loved long ago. Speak! I will hear thee.
Clau. If I give up Claudina to your power,
Will you bestow upon me in exchange,
The life and pardon of such other captive
As I shall ask?
Omr. I will—I will—discover
My enemy's bride, and—
Clau. Swear then, by the gods!
Omr. I swear!
Tre. She raves—she knows not what she says.
Omr. Silence—my oath is pledged.
Clau. *I* am Claudina.
Omr. Art thou Montalbert's bride? Thank heav'n, that made thee
So much resemble her for whose lov'd memory
Thou art to suffer!
Clau. Now for my reward.
Omr. Claim it.
Clau. I claim the freedom of Trefusis.
Omr. Trefusis!
Clau. You have sworn.
Omr. 'Twas a rash oath—

But 'twas Omreah's, and it must be sacred—
Release the European.
Tre. Oh Claudina,
What hast thou ventured, and for whom?
Clau. For him
Who has done all for me.

Enter a Carib.

Omr. Now, whence art thou?
Carib. From the North Headland, where I have kept watch
For the expected landing of the English
From Guadaloupe.
Tre. Well, are they come?
Carib. They're landed,
And lie close ranged behind their vessels, waiting
Till duly summon'd hither.
Omr. (*To* TREFUSIS.) Tarry yet:
(*To* LOGAMAH.) Force off that ring he wears.
Tre. What further outrage,
Monster!
Omr. There is no Maloch now, to clog
With creeping policy my fixed resolve,
T'extirpate root and branch. (*To* LOGAMAH.) Produce the ring
To the commander of these white allies:
It is the token, which, as Maloch told me,
They would expect, lest France should gain some note
Of their arrival, and send false conductors,
To snare them. Say you had it from Trefusis:
They will accept you for their guide, and follow
What road you point.

Log. The cover'd swamp of reeds?
Omr. Thou hast it! excellent comrade, thou forstall'st
My very thought! the darkness of the night,
The wildly broken paths, and sudden turns
By copse and precipice, will cheat them on
To that invisible peril, where they fall
Ere they have time to fear. Once in, they plunge
And strive in vain: The thick engulphing quagmire
Swells round them with their bulk, and chokes down,
While you, that know the ground, will straightway gain
The narrow bridge of stones that threads the swamp,
And bring the tidings. [*Exit* Logamah.
Tref. Dost thou think my country
So poor of strength, or so debased of spirit,
To brook a deed like this?
Omr. I have pronounced it.
We are the masters now; and when we've clear'd
These white pests from our land, and made it sure
With our own forts, and all those arts of war
The experience of your murderous tribe has taught us,
We'll keep our native isle, or, losing, die for 't.
Caribs. Long live Omreah! Let him reign among us!
Omr. Yet further: Lest some babbler reach the English,
Disclose the snare my guides are sent to frame,
And bring a force to take this victim from me,—
Station a guard to stop the pass, that leads
Tow'rd the North Headland. When the sacrifice

Is over, not before, set this man free.
[*He gives directions to several Indians, who go out.*]
Tre. I scorn a freedom so conferr'd! bestow it
Upon this innocent captive.
Omr. Shall I quit
The instinct heav'n has planted in all hearts,
The generous lust of natural, sweet revenge?
While Europe's wise and civilized savages
Cut throats, as artificial passions prompt,
Still, still let us, the sons of purer skies,
Placed here at nature's sources, where her spring
Bursts fresh and unpolluted, follow only
The genuine pulse she wakes, and freely feast
The inborn appetites of our fiercer spirits!
Clau. (*to* TREF.) Do not incense him to recall his oath,
Nor waste for me the life you owe your country.
I am mark'd out for an especial pain,
And am prepar'd to die;—but not to bear
The death of those I love.
Omr. And, that no chance
May frustrate my intentions, and preserve
The English from my toils, to interrupt
These vengeful obsequies,—hasten the rites!
And yonder, on the spot where stood their fort,
Pile up an altar for the sacrifice.
Half my revenge Montalbert's flight cuts off:
But, having her, I have his heart in pledge,
And will exact the forfeit.—She shall die,
And die by me! and he shall know that death,
And own at last Omreah's pow'r has reach'd him!
[*Exit.*
Tre. To perish thus, almost in sight of succour,
Aggravates death itself.

Carb. The only way
To reach the English, lies across the pass
Which he has sent to guard—all hope is lost!
Clau. I have abandon'd hope. (*to* TRE.) Friend,
do not leave me:
Your lofty spirit will sustain my strength!
Tre. And what, Claudina, shall sustain my
spirit?
Clau. Come, to my prison. We've been parted
long,
And have but met again to part for ever!
Support me—I am faint—a sickening mist
Spreads on my swimming eyes, and closes from
me
The scene of life I'm leaving.—Lead me on.

[*Exeunt.*

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

ACT V.

SCENE I.

The Northern Headland.

Enter KATHELRADE *and* MONTALBERT.

Kath. Here ends our march: this is the Northern Headland;
And yonder lies the boat which must transport you
To Martinique.
Mont. Ere this, I trust Claudina
Has reached the cave, and waits my coming there.
Hark! there's a murmur of voices—Haply
The English force Trefusis told us of.
If I encounter them, I shall be made
Their prisoner; therefore do thou climb the rock,
And keep strict watch, while I unmoor the boat.
Kath. Gently—the lightest plashing of the oars
Betrays you.
[MONTALBERT *turns up the stage;* KATHELRADE, *going off at the side, is observed by* LOGAMAH, *as he enters.*]
Log. Who goes there?
Kath. My son, Logamah?

Log. Aye, mother! whither tend you thus betimes?

Kath. (Aside) I must not own my errand. *(to him).* I am here
By order of Trefusis, to await
The expected coming of the English force,
And send him instant warning.

Log. I shall spare you
That task, good mother:

[MONTALBERT *appears at the back of the stage;* KATHELRADE *motions to him to conceal himself.*]

We have laid an ambush
Which they will scarce escape.

Kath. An ambush!

Log. Aye—
Omreah has made prisoners of Trefusis
And of Montalbert's wife, and one or both
Are doom'd to die as Maloch's funeral victims;—
Whose rescue to prevent, and clear the isle
For ever from these white men, Prince Omreah
Has sent me hither, a pretended guide,
To snare their soldiers into yon morass,
Where, to a man, they perish. And, to aid
The project, I have here a ring, which we
Have wrested from Trefusis, as a voucher
That I am sent from him.

Kath. Beware, my son;
I had been well nigh robb'd of thy poor brother,
My gentle Carbal. Having rescued him,
Let me not thus, by thy too daring spirit,
Lose my Logamah too.

Log. Doubt me not, mother;
My own escape is well provided. Turn thee
Back to our tents, and let Omreah know

I'm thus far on my way. [*Exit.*

Mont. *(Coming forward.)* Thank heav'n, that yet
I may avert this mischief.

Kath. How? By warning
The English of this plot?

Mont. 'Tis the sole hope
To save my wife and friend.

Kath. I pray you, go not;
They will but make you prisoner: Trust to me;
Let me inform the English officers,
And leave you here secure.

Mont. You are unknown:
Against the strong credential of that ring,
You will not be believed. But when I greet them,
My name and character will be a pledge
That I deceive them not; and if I risk
My own captivity, I risk but little,
To save Claudina's life.

Kath. You are too eager. [*Holding him.*

Mont. Oppose me not: if I delay my purpose,
The rescue may arrive too late to serve them.
Carbal, as chief among your native priesthood,
Will have the conduct of the sacrifice:
Return, and urge him, for Trefusis' sake,
To make such hindrance of the bloody rite,
As may give time to warn the English troops,
And bring them to the rescue.

Kath. But, my son,
Logamah——

Mont. Fear not for him; I will see
To his security.

Kath. I shall obey thee:
But look thou to my son! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A narrow pass between rocks; Caribs guarding it.

Enter CARBAL.

Carb. This is the pass
That leads to the North Headland; it is guarded;
But I will try the venture. Could I reach
The English force, and whisper but a word
Of these sad news, the blow might yet be stay'd.
So,—stand aside. [*To the guard.*
1*st Carib.* Omreah's word is strict,
That none may pass that way.
Carb. What recompence
Should tempt you to transgress the order?
1*st Carib.* None;
We're watch'd too strictly: Brancho goes the rounds,
To see we do our duty. He approaches—
Stand back.
Carb. You are a trusty sentinel,
And I will praise your vigilance to Omreah.

Enter BRANCHO.

Bra. All is secure. Our sentries are alert,
And no tale-bearing messenger can now

Make way, to warn the English of our purpose.
When meet we for the sacrifice?
Carb. Alas!
I fear too soon.
Bra. Thou, that so long hast borne
Our sacred garb, dost thou begin at last
To tremble at the task religion dictates?
Carb. I tremble at the task of blood, although
Religion gloss the murder.
Bra. Fantasy!
Is it not enemies' blood thou art to shed?
I'll tell thee, friend: I am no more possess'd
Than thou art, with crude appetite to kill,
For slaughter's sake; but what Omreah wills,
I hold it wise to further.
Carb. What he wills!
What grace is in his will, that it should shape
My free act with it?
Bra. Can'st thou not discern
What star is rising? He has gain'd the people,
And they have hail'd him king in Maloch's stead.
Carb. I venerate the king; but venerate heaven
Yet more.
Bra. Whose servants if we would remain,
His pleasure must be done who can uphold us.
Carb. Heaven will uphold us, if we are its servants;
If not, some other hand than mine, must do
Omreah's pleasure.
Bra. You have timely notice:
It has been still the task of our chief priest
To wield the sacred knife: and if you now
Desert this solemn use, for childish pity,

Your head may answer't, Carbal. [*Exit.*
Carb. How avoid
This dreadful office? I have held the priesthood
In the fond hope to mingle with its laws
The milder spirit of that better creed,
Which Europe's sons have taught me: but this day
Revives our foulest rites!

KATHELRADE *appears behind the pass.*

2d Carib. Who comes?
Kath. A friend:
Why is this streight thus guarded?
2d Carib. To prevent
All passage outward; you, that come this way,
May have free entrance.
[KATHELRADE *passes, and comes forward to* CARBAL.]
Kath. Hope revives! Ere this
The tidings of the intended sacrifice
Have been reported to the English force;
And if you can retard its execution
A single hour, your friends are saved.
Car. Indeed!
Kath. Within that hour the English must be here.
Car. Who is the messenger dispatched to seek them?
Kath. A zealous and a prudent one —Montalbert!
Carb. Then I will take the office which before
I had resolved to shun: I will preside
At this dire ceremonial, and contrive
Whatever may delay it.

Kath. Haste thee then,
And warn Trefusis : I will keep my watch
Around this pass, and bring you instant notice
When the expected rescue comes in sight.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

The ruins of the fort.

Enter CLAUDINA, TREFUSIS, BRANCHO, *Prisoners and Caribs.*

Clau. Frail Nature's agony is almost past :
But one short hour, and life, and pain, and sorrow,
Will cease together.
Tre. What shall comfort thee,
Claudina, best beloved ?
Clau. There is indeed
No tie to knit me with the world I leave ;
No hope that might with longer cherishing
Have budded into joy.—I have but wander'd,
As in a painful and perplexed dream,
Through a dark vale of tears ; and now at last,
Sound, quiet sleep, comes on.
Tre. Death has no sting
For thee, on whose clear mind ev'n passing thought
Ne'er cast a breath of harm.
Clau. The last sharp pang
Is past : and I am ready for my fate.

[*During the last sentence,* CARBAL *has entered, and spoken aside with* TREFUSIS.]

Tre. (*Aside to* CARBAL.) It is a hope too joyful to be trusted;
A thousand crosses may prevent them! Pr'ythee,
Let not Claudina know this chance of rescue,
Lest disappointment aggravate her doom.

Enter OMREAH.

Omr. Now, to the sacrifice—Are all things ready?

Car. All things are ready.

Omr. Lead her to the altar.
You, holy priests, to which of you belongs
The ministry of offerings to the dead?

Car. To me, as chief, that awful task pertains.

Omr. Come then, draw forth the consecrated steel;
And ye, fire-worship'd deities, that guard
This aboriginal and heav'n born race,
Give virtue to the blade, that as it draws
The heart's blood of the sacrifice, that stream
May pour a cleansing tide, and its red stain
Be on the temper'd edge for ever more,
A talisman against the pow'rs of Europe!
Lead her away! the altar waits.

Car. So soon!
Grant her a moment's time, but to prepare
For this hard doom. (*aside*) No sign of Kathelrade,
Nor of the English!

Omr. Heard you not my words?

Carb. I did—but yet—

Omr. But what? It seems I'm chosen
Your king, in name alone, and not in power,
That thus I'm disobey'd.
Carb. It is in vain,—
I cannot do it.
Omr. What device is this?
Do they conspire to mock me with a pageant?
Or have her woman's fears infected thee,
That thou dost quail to lift the lawful knife,
Thou recreant minister of indignant heav'n,
Against its foes and ours?
Carb. She's not our foe; (*to the Caribs*)
Behold her, warriors! does not the bright tint
Of that soft olive skin bespeak her rather
Our kindred?
Omr. (*to the Caribs.*) Is she not Montalbert's wife?
Friends—husbands—fathers—men!—have sixteen years
Effaced th' engrain'd remembrance from our souls,
How at their lordly feet we begg'd for mercy,
And found it not? have our faint hearts forgotten
How women knelt, and infants shriek'd in vain,
As the smear'd murderers raged from hut to hut
Amid our mountain homes, till the steep paths
Grew slippery with our blood, and bursting flames
Finish'd the havock of the unslaked sword?
Car. Yet hear—
Omr. Who loosed—who led those fiends? Montalbert!
Who sold us into bondage? rooted out
Through all the south our homes—rights—honours—rule,

And very name? wrung tribute from the north,
Tribute of brutish slavery,—till we rose
Thus in our wrath and crush'd him? Nay, look there;
Who was it, but to-night, that smote the life,
The royal life, of him whose reverend form
Lies on yon pile in stark cold death before you,
Claiming that victim due? still, still Montalbert;
That victim's husband! Let her die, then, warriors,
Ere heav'n's displeasure wing the shaft at us;
For the vext ghost of our unburied Maloch
Hovers upon us like a holy curse,
And claims this due atonement!

1st. Carib. Let her die;
Why should we brave religion's ban? if Carbal
Refuse the office, Brancho can fulfil it
With hand as holy.

Bra. What religion wills,
And the king sanctions, I will execute.

Omr. Thou art a faithful servant—take the weapon,
That nerveless arm renounces.

Tre. They arrive not;—
Each moment seems an age.

Car. Oh yet, have pity -
Look at her clasped hands, her beauteous eyes,
Streaming their silent grief—

Clau. Nay, gentle Carbal,
Thou but mak'st suit unto the flinty rock!

Omr. (*to* CARBAL.) What! thou'rt enamour'd of those lucid eyes,
That soft complexion, and the slender grace
Of that enwreathed form! Why, such a one,

My heart once loved, and mus this hour
avenge!
Yes, such was once the fond wife of my bosom:
She had that tint, those eyes, that waving form;
So sweetly look'd—so passionately wept,
And called on me for help, when in my sight,
Bound as I was, Montalbert's soldiers stabb'd
her!
Such, had she 'scaped, were now my blooming
daughter,
Whom they pluck'd from me, as her little arms
Clung round my neck, imploring—Oh, those
wounds
Of years long past, still, still they rankle deep,
Still cry within me for their last relief—
Vengeance!

[KATHALRADE *rushes down the stage.*

Kath. They come, they come! Hold off your
hands!
The English are in sight upon the hill,
And we are yet in time!

Tre. It is—I see them—
The morning twilight glimmers on their arms,
And shews them to be near!

Omr. Nay then, no more
Of superstitious doubt and weak delay.
Hurry her to the altar; there are yet
Some few short moments, which shall be our own.
Priest, do thine office—thus, thus, through her
heart
We strike to his!

[*They hurry her to an altar at the back of the stage: in her struggle, she drops her necklace, which falls at Omreah's feet; she is surrounded at the back of the stage, so as not to be seen by the audience.* TRE-

FUSIS *strives in vain to break from those who hold him.* OMREAH *remains in front.*]

Omr. (continuing.) Be the blow deadly to him—
And widowed desolation, such as mine,
Lie cureless on his bosom!

Kath. No! ye dare not!—
Ye dare not do it—they are close at hand—
Th' avengers are upon you!—

Tre. Murderous outlaw!
Claudina! Sure my coward limbs grow faint,
Or I could dash these brutal slaves aside,
And force the way to succour and redress!

Omr. What, it has gall'd thee, then?—Merciful heaven!
What's this? this jewel?—Stay, officious priest,
Stay your unhallow'd hands! I must speak with her
Before she dies!

Carb. (from the crowd.) Your mercy comes in vain;
She bleeds to death!

Omr. Accursed haste—

[*She is led forward, toward* TREFUSIS.

Clau. Support me
Forward. Dear friend, once more, farewell!

Omr. This chain—
How and whence hadst it thou?

Clau. If in thy nature
There's any touch of pity, keep the jewels,
That if my parents live, and ever hear
My fatal story, they may know their child
Was poor Claudina.

Omr. Girl—who were thy parents?

Clau. I know not; for I was an infant yet,
When, on the first invasion of this isle,

Montalbert saved me, in the southern forest,
From a French soldier, who had raised his sword
To slay me for these gems. I'm faint!
Omr. It is,
It is—the time—the place—thy mother's voice—
Her look—her very features—'tis my daughter!
Clau. Can it be so? Am I Omreah's offspring?
Trefusis—
Tre. Monster! Heaven has turned thy rancour
On thine own head!
Omr. And is it thus the parent
Regains his long-lost child?
Clau. Farewell, my father!
Embrace me ere I die, *(She sinks to the ground. He kneels.)* and in this kiss,
Receive the last forgiveness of a heart
Whose pulse now stops for ever. [*Dies.*
Omr. Daughter, speak!
Speak to me; let me hear that voice again,
So like thy mother's!—silent still! quite dead!
My child, my child! *(Throws himself on the body.*

Enter MONTALBERT *with an English force.*

Kath. Alas! you come too late:
I cannot tell the tale—let your own eyes
Behold it there, and then be blind for ever!
Mont. What horror's here? my wife! my own Claudina!
Who has done this?
Omr. (*starting up.*) Thou, thou hast done it all—
Be that thy recompence;
[OMREAH *attempts to stab* MONTALBERT; *but the soldiers interposing, strike the blade out of its direction.* OMREAH *recovers himself instantly, and looks round him.*]
Am I outnumber'd?

Mont. Aye, and our pris'ner.
Omr. Even so? then thus
I free myself for ever. *(stabs himself)* Pardon me,
Great gods, if for a moment the weak grief
Of a fond father shook my nature's firmness!
'Tis past, and I am nerved again. Ha! ha!
Confess that I have triumph'd o'er thee, Christian!
I have redeem'd my amplest pledge of hate
Upon thy aching heart, which, now, I thank them
They would not let me pierce—since I would have thee
Still live--and bear my dying curses with thee!
(dies.)
Mont. Thou hast said truly. On my head, indeed,
Is all this load of wretchedness and guilt!
Trefusis, I am master here no more:
To you, and yours, this wasted land belongs;
And for myself, I will remain your pris'ner,
Till peace returning, give me pow'r to choose
Some monast'ry, where, in lone prayer and penance,
I may wear out the remnant of my days.
Tre. Thou'rt free, Montalbert: Carbal, raise the bodies,
And when we shall have shed our parting tears
Upon the early grave of that sweet flower,
We will again to sea, and leave the isle,
Thus by heav'n's aid delivered from our foes,
To its own heirs, the children of the soil.

THE END.

EPILOGUE,

WRITTEN BY THE HON. W. R. SPENCER.

SPOKEN BY MRS. MARDYN.

" Tis not in authors to command success,
But to deserve it,'s more."—No, no—'tis *less*.
Our authors have no selfish joy in view—
And only please themselves in pleasing you.
They deem no laurel worthy their pursuit,
Unless 'tis grafted with nutritious fruit:
One aim is theirs (though some affect to scoff it),
Call'd by the gods, Renown; by mortals—Profit.
When you with loud acclaim the bards admire,
Fame through her trumpet blows—their kitchen fire;
Making (sweet recompence of classic toil!)
At once their hearts to glow—their pots to boil!
Fame—Fame is all—and if they fail to win her,
They *may* get their *desert*—but where's their *dinner?*

But how to catch—(aye, there's the rub!)—the power
To please a taste that varies every hour?
Our elders were high-fliers from their birth,
Whilst we, *more filial*, cling to mother earth;—
All in *their* dance was caper, vault, and bound,
Whilst our *teetotum waltz* just skims the ground.
To take the air, how different are our courses—
They climb'd *balloons*,—*we* mount on—*wooden horses*.
The students now all lectures disregard,
Not for the *stable*, but the *timber*-yard.

In vain Old Bucks may vaunt their "*bits of blood*,"
Whilst every Dandy boasts "*his bit of wood*."
In forests, not in pastures, breeders vie;
And clumps, not haras, future studs supply,
While sanguine jockies see, where'er they rove,
Saplin *Eclipses* sprout in every grove.
New terms must now old similes replace,
New sporting gibes be learnt:—at hunt, or race,
"That nag's a *stick*," what connoiseur will utter?
"Lame as a *tree*, what groom will dare to mutter?
Our cocknies now will fear no break-neck tumble,
On steeds that never start, and seldom stumble;
And hunters only one small danger find,
To break their horses' *wheels*, and not their *wind*.
Then for our *letters*—oh, the sweet invention!
And Johnson well deserves a *Palmer's* pension!
Bus'ness or Love may travel by express,
With speed far greater, and expence far less;
On wood scarce thicker than a witch's broomstick.
Laden with news, I see the *Hobby groom-stick*
Speed the soft intercourse from soul to soul,
And waft a sigh o'er England—on a pole!
Our "*wooden walls*" were long the patriot toast—
Soon, *wooden cavalry* shall be our boast;
And when some WELLINGTON to conquest leads
Our new-built squadron of—Velocipedes,
What foe will dare our prowess to withstand,
Borne on our native oak o'er sea and land!

W. POPLE, Printer, 67, Chancery Lane.

VIRGINIUS:

A Tragedy.

IN FIVE ACTS.

AS PERFORMED

AT THE

Theatre Royal, Covent Garden.

BY

JAMES SHERIDAN KNOWLES, Esq.

THIRD EDITION.

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DEDICATION.

To WILLIAM MACREADY, Esq.

My Dear Sir,

What can I do less than dedicate this Tragedy to you? This is a question which you cannot answer; but I can—I cannot do less; and if I could do more, I ought, and would.

I was a perfect stranger to you: You read my play, and at once committed yourself respecting its merits. This, perhaps, is not saying much for your head—but it says a great deal for your heart; and that is the consideration, which above all others, makes me feel happy, and proud, in subscribing myself,

Your grateful Friend, and Servant,

James Sheridan Knowles.

London, May 20, 1820.

THIS Play was written in great haste, and, no doubt, abounds in defects—but it is a question, whether it would have been less imperfect, had I taken a year to compose it. It was revolved and executed in about three months, in the midst of very numerous and arduous avocations. To a distinguished individual who suggested to me the idea of writing it, I shall ever feel grateful.

I owe the public an apology for the last act; and this is my apology—History gives two accounts of the manner of Appius's death: one, that he committed suicide; the other, that he was destroyed privately by the Tribunes. Had I selected for my catastrophe, the latter incident, the character of the tyrant had stood too prominent; by adopting the former, I should have violated the respect due to a Christian audience. After having excited such an interest for Virginius, it would have been indecent to represent him in the attitude of taking the law into his own hands. I therefore adopted the idea of his destroying Appius in a fit of temporary insanity, which gives the catastrophe the air of a visitation of Providence.

I am most sensible of the very great degree in which I am indebted to the Ladies and Gentlemen of the Theatre Royal, Covent-Garden; and I beg them to believe that I feel more than I can very readily express. To forget what I owe to the Theatre where my Play was first performed, would be ungrateful; and, under any circumstances, to omit the acknowledgment of it would be unprincipled and mean. I take, therefore, this opportunity of thanking also, the Company of the Glasgow Theatre.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Men.

Appius Claudius	*Decemvirs*	Mr. ABBOTT.
Spurius Oppius		Mr. WHITE.
Vibulanus		Mr. JEFFERIES.
Honorius	*Patricians*	Mr. NORRIS.
Valerius		Mr. VEDY.
Caius Claudius	*Clients to Appius*	Mr. CONNOR.
Marcus		Mr. CLAREMONT.
Dentatus	*A Veteran*	Mr. TERRY.
Virginius	*A Centurion*	Mr. MACREADY.
Numitorius	*His brother-in-law*	Mr. EGERTON.
Icilius	*In love with Virginia*	Mr. C. KEMBLE.
Lucius	*Brother of Icilius*	Mr. COMER.
Publius	*Soldiers*	Mr. MEARS.
Decius		Mr. TREBY.
Sextus		Mr. CRUMPTON.
Titus	*Citizens*	Mr. FAUCIT.
Servius		Mr. ATKINS.
Cneius		Mr. KING.

Women.

Virginia	*Daughter of Virginius* MISS FOOTE.
Servia	*Her Nurse* MRS. FAUCIT.
Female Slave	MRS. CHIPP.

Citizens, *Male and Female*—Soldiers, Lictors, &c.

SCENE, chiefly Rome.

The passages marked with inverted commas are omitted in the representation.

PROLOGUE,

By J. H. REYNOLDS, Esq.

Spoken by Miss Booth.

[*Speaking behind.*] Nay, Mr. Fawcett, give me leave, I pray,
The audience wait, and I must have my way. [*Enters*]
What! curb a woman's tongue!—As I'm alive,
The wretch would mar our old prerogative!
Ladies! by very dint of pertinacity,
Have I preserv'd the glory of loquacity.

Oh! could you gaze, as I am gazing now,
And see each man behind, with gather'd brow,
And clenched hand (tho' nought my spirit damps)
Beckoning, with threats, my presence, from the lamps:
Each, as I broke my way, declared how well,
His art could woo you—to be peaceable!
One is well robed—a second greatly shines,
In the nice balance, of *cast-iron* lines;
A third can sing—a fourth can touch your tears—
A fifth—"I'll see no more!"—a fifth appears,
Who hath been once in Italy, and seen Rome;
In short—there's quite a hubbub in the Green Room.
But I—a very woman—careless—light—
Fleet idly to your presence, this fair night;
And, craving your sweet pardon, fain would say
A kind word, for the poet, and his play.

To night, no idle nondescript, lays waste,
The fairy, and yet placid bower, of taste:
No story, piled with dark, and cumbrous fate,
And words, that stagger, under their own weight,
But one of silent grandeur—simply said,
As tho' it were awaken'd from the dead!
It is a tale—made beautiful by years;—
Of pure, old, Roman sorrow—old in tears!
And those, you shed o'er it in childhood, may,
Still fall—and fall—for sweet Virginia!

Nor doth a crowned poet of the age,
Call the sweet spirits, from the historic page!
No old familiar dramatist, hath spun,
This tragic, antique web, to-night—but one,
An unknown author, in a sister land,
Waits, in young fear, the fiat of your hand.

ACT I.

SCENE FIRST.

A STREET IN ROME.

Enter SERVIUS *and* CNEIUS.

Servius. Carbo denied a hearing !

Cneius. Ay, and Marcellus cast into prison, because he sued a friend of one of the Decemvirs for a sum of money he had lent him.

Servius. And Appius resisted not? Appius ! that in the first Decemvirate was a god to the people.

Cne. Resisted not ! Nay, was most loud in favour of the decree; but hither comes Virginius, who interested himself so much in Carbo's affair. He looks a little heated. Is not that Titus he is speaking to? Stand aside, Master, and listen.

Enter VIRGINIUS *and* TITUS.

Virginius. Why did you make him Decemvir, and first Decemvir too ?

Tit. We had tried him, and found him honest.

Virginius. And could you not have remained content? Why try him again to find him dishonest? Knew ye not he was a Patrician, and of the Claudian family?

Tit. He laid down the Consulate—

Virginius. Ha! ha! ha! to be elected into the Decemvirate, and he was so; and he laid down his office of Decemvir, to be re-elected into the Decemvirate, and he is so; Ay, by Jupiter! and to the exclusion of his late colleagues! Did not Titus Genutius lay down the Consulate?

Tit. He did.

Virginius. Was he not next to Appius in the Decemvirate?

Tit. He was.

Virginius. Did you not find him honest?

Tit. We did find him honest.

Virginius. As honest as Appius Claudius?

Tit. Quite as honest.

Virginius. Quite as honest! And why not re-elect him Decemvir? Most sapient people! You re-elect Appius into the Decemvirate for his honesty, and you thrust Titus out of the Decemvirate—I suppose for his honesty also! Why, Appius was sick of the Decemvirate!

Servius. I never heard him say so.

Virginius. But he did say so—say so in my hearing; in presence of the senators, Valerius and Caius Claudius, and I don't know how many others. 'Twas known to the whole body of the Senate—not that he was sick, but that he said so. Yes! yes! he and his colleagues, he said, had done the work of the Republic for a whole year, and it was now but just to grant them a little repose, and appoint others to succeed them.

Tit. Well, well, we can only say he chang'd his mind.

Virginius. No, no, we needn't say that neither; as he had laboured in the Decemvirate, perhaps he thought he might as well repose in the Decemvirate.

Tit. I know not what he thought. He is Decemvir, and we made him so, and cannot help

ourselves. Fare you well, Virginius. Come, let's to the Forum. [*Exeunt Titus, Servius, and Cneius.*

Virginius. You cannot help yourselves! Indeed, you cannot;
You help'd to put your masters on your backs.
They like their seat, and make you show your paces;
They ride you—sweat you—curb you—lash you—and
You cannot throw them off with all your mettle!
But here comes one, whose share in giving you
To such unsparing riders, touches me
More nearly, for that I've an interest
In proving him a man of fair, and most
Erect integrity. Good day, Icilius.

Enter ICILIUS.

Icilius. Worthy Virginius! 'tis an evil day
For Rome, that gives her more convincing proof,
The thing she took for hope, is but a base
And wretched counterfeit! Our new Decemvirs
Are any thing but friends to justice and
Their country.

Virginius. You, Icilius, had a hand
In their election. You applied to me
To aid you with my vote, in the Comitia;
I told you then, and tell you now again,
I am not pleas'd when a Patrician bends
His head to a Plebeian's girdle! Mark me!
I'd rather he should stand aloof, and wear
His shoulder high—especially the nephew
Of Caius Claudius.

Icil. I would have pledg'd my life—

Virginius. 'Twas a high gage, and men have stak'd a higher
On grounds as poor as yours—their honour, boy!
Icilius, I have heard it all—your plans—
The understanding 'twixt the heads of the people—
Of whom, Icilius, you are reckon'd one, and

Worthily—and Appius Claudius—all—
'Twas every jot disclos'd to me.
Icil. By whom?
Virginius. Siccius Dentatus.
Icil. He disclos'd it to you;
Siccius Dentatus is a crabbed man.
Virginius. Siccius Dentatus is an honest man!
There's not a worthier in Rome! How now?
Has he deceiv'd me? Do you call him liar?
My friend! my comrade! honest Siccius,
That has fought in six score battles?
Icil. Good Virginius,
Siccius Dentatus is my friend—the friend
Of every honest man in Rome—a brave man—
A most brave man. Except yourself, Virginius,
I do not know a man I prize above
Siccius Dentatus—yet he's a crabbed man.
Virginius. Yes, yes; he is a crabbed man.
Icil. A man
Who loves too much to wear a jealous eye.
Virginius. No, not a whit!—where there is double dealing.
You are the best judge of your own concerns;
Yet, if it please you to communicate
With me upon this subject, come and see me.
I told you, boy, I favour'd not this stealing
And winding into place. What he deserves,
An honest man dares challenge 'gainst the world—
But come and see me. Appius Claudius chosen
Decemvir, and his former colleagues, that
Were quite as honest as himself, not chosen—
No not so much as nam'd by him—who nam'd
Himself, and his new associates! Well, 'tis true.
Dog fights with dog; but honesty is not
A cur, doth bait his fellow—and e'en dogs,
By habit of companionship, abide
In terms of faith and cordiality—
But come and see me.

Icil. Appius comes!
The people still throng after him with shouts,
Unwilling to believe their Jupiter
Has mark'd them for his thunder. Will you stay,
And see the homage that they render him?

Virginius. Not I! Stay you; and, as you made him, hail him;
And shout, and wave your hand, and cry, long live
Our first and last Decemvir, Appius Claudius!
For he is first, and last, and every one!
Rome owes you much, Icilius—Fare you well—
I shall be glad to see you at my house.

[*Exit Virginius.*

Enter APPIUS CLAUDIUS—CLAUDIUS—SICCIUS—DENTATUS—LUCIUS—TITUS—SERVIUS—MARCUS, *and* CITIZENS *shouting.*

Tit. Long live our first Decemvir!
Long live Appius Claudius!
Most noble Appius! Appius and the Decemvirate for ever! (*Citizens shout.*)

App. My countrymen and fellow citizens,
We will deserve your favour.

Tit. You have deserv'd it,
And will deserve it.

App. For that end we named
Ourself Decemvir.

Tit. You could not have nam'd a better man.

Den. For his own purpose. (*Aside.*)

App. Be assur'd, we hold
Our power but for your good. Your gift it was;
And gifts make surest debtors. Fare you well—
And, for your salutations, pardon me,
If I repay you only with an echo—
Long live the worthy citizens of Rome!

[*Exit Appius, &c. the people shouting.*

Den. That was a very pretty echo!—a most soft echo. I never thought your voices were half so sweet! a most melodious echo! I'd have you ever after make

your music before the Patricians' Palaces ; they give most exquisite responses !—especially that of Appius Claudius ! a most delicate echo !

Tit. What means Dentatus ?

Servius. He's ever carping—nothing pleases him.

Den. O ! yes—you please me—please me mightily, I assure you.—You are noble legislators, take most especial care of your own interests, bestow your votes most wisely too—on him who has the wit to get you into the humour ; and withal, have most musical voices—most musical—if one may judge by their echo.

Tit. Why, what quarrel have you with our choice? Could we have chosen better ?—I say they are ten honest Decemvirs we have chosen.

Den. I pray you name them me.

Tit. There's Appius Claudius, first Decemvir.

Den. Ay, call him the head ; you are right. Appius Claudius, the head. Go on !

Tit. And Quintus Fabius Vibulanus.

Den. The body, that eats and drinks while the head thinks. Call him Appius's stomach. Fill him, and keep him from cold and indigestion, and he'll never give Appius the head-ache ! Well ?—There's excellent comfort in having a good stomach !—Well ?

Tit. There's Cornelius, Marcus Servilius, Minucius, and Titus Antonius.

Den. Arms, legs, and thighs !

Tit. And Marcus Rabuleius.

Den. He'll do for a hand, and as he's a senator, we'll call him the right-hand. We couldn't do less, you know, for a Senator ! Well ?

Luc. At least, you'll say we did well in electing Quintius Petilius, Caius Duellius, and Spurius Oppius, men of our order ! sound men ! "known sticklers for the people"—at least you'll say we did well in that !

Den. And who dares say otherwise? "Well!" one might as well say "ill" as "well." Well is the very skirt of commendation; next neighbour to that mire and gutter, "ill." "Well," indeed! you acted like yourselves! Nay, e'en yourselves could not have acted better! Why, had you not elected them—Appius would have gone without his left-hand, and each of his two feet.

Servius. Out! you are dishonest!

Den. Ha!

Servius. What would content you?

Den. A post in a hot battle! Out, you cur! Do you talk to me?

Citizen. [*from behind.*]

Down with him, he does nothing but insult the people.

(*The Crowd approach Dentatus, threateningly.*)

Icil. Stand back! Who is't that says down with Siccius Dentatus? Down with him! 'Tis what the enemy could never do; and shall we do it for them? Who uttered that dishonest word? Who uttered it, I say? Let him answer a fitter, though less worthy mate, Lucius Icilius!

Citizens. Stand back, and hear Icilius!

Icil. What! hav'n't I voted for the Decemvirs, and do I snarl at his jests? Has he not a right to jest? the good, honest Siccius Dentatus that, alone, at the head of the veterans, vanquished the Œqui for you. Has he not a right to jest? For shame! get to your houses! The worthy Dentatus! Cheer for him, if you are Romans! Cheer for him before you go! Cheer for him, I say!

[*Exeunt Citizens, shouting.*

Den. And now, what thanks do you expect from me, Icilius?

Icil. None.

Den. By Jupiter, young man, had you thus stepped before me in the heat of battle, I would have cloven you down—but I'm obliged to you, Icilius—and hark you! There's a piece of furniture in the house of a friend of mine, that's called Virginius, I think you've set your heart upon—dainty enough—yet not amiss for a young man to covet. Ne'er lose your hopes! He may be brought into the mind to part with it. As to these curs, I question which I value more, their fawnings, or their snarlings—I thank you, boy! Do you walk this way?—I am glad of it! Come—'Tis a noble Decemvirate you have chosen for us! Come! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE SECOND.

VIRGINIUS's HOUSE.

Enter VIRGINIUS *and* SERVIA.

Virginius. And is this all you have observ'd? I think
There's nothing strange in that. An L and an I
Twin'd with a V. Three very innocent letters
To have bred such mischief in thy brain, good Servia!
Come, read this riddle to me.

Servia. You may laugh
Virginius; but I'll read the riddle right.
The L doth stand for Lucius; and the I,
Icilius; which, I take it, will compose
Lucius Icilius.

Virginius. So it will, good Servia.

Servia. Then, for the V ; why, that is plain Virginia.

Virginius. And now, what conjuration find you here ?

Servia. What should I find but love ? The maid's in love,
And it is with Icilius. Look, the wreath
Is made of roses, that entwines the letters.

Virginius. And this is all ?

Servia. And is it not enough ?
You'll find this figuring where e'er you look :
There's not a piece of dainty work she does--
Embroidery, or painting—not a task
She finishes, but on the skirt, or border,
In needle-work, or pencil, this, her secret,
The silly wench betrays.

Virginius. Go, send her to me—
Stay! Have you spoken to her of it ?

Servia. I! Not I, indeed ; I left that task to you---
Tho' once I asked her what the letters meant.
She laugh'd, and drew a scratch across them ; but
Had scarce done so, ere her fair visage fell,
For grief that she had spoiled the cyphers—" and
A sigh came out, and then almost a tear ;
And she did look, as piteous on the harm
That she had done, as she had done it to
A thing, had sense to feel it." Never after
She let me note her at work again.
She had good reason !

Virginius. Send her to me Servia. [*Exit Servia.*
There's something here, that looks as it would bring me
Anticipation of my wish. I think
Icilius loves my daughter—nay, I know it;
And such a man I'd challenge for her husband ;—
And only waited, till her forward spring,
Put on, a little more, the genial likeness
Of colouring into summer, ere I sought
To nurse a flower, which, blossoming too early,

Too early often dies ; " but if it springs
Spontaneous, and, unlooked for, woos our hand
To tend and cherish it, the growth is healthful ;
And 'twere untimely, as unkind, to check it."
I'll ascertain it shortly—soft, she comes.

Enter VIRGINIA.

Virginia. Well, Father, what's your will ?
Virginius. I wish'd to see you,
To ask you of your tasks—how they go on—
And what your masters say of you—what last
You did. I hope you never play
The truant ?
Virginia. The truant ! No, indeed, Virginius.
Virginius. I am sure you do not—kiss me !
Virginia. O ! my Father
I am so happy, when you're kind to me !
Virginius. You are so happy when I'm kind to you !
Am I not always kind ? I never spoke
An angry word to you in all my life,
Virginia ! You are happy when I'm kind !
That's strange ; and makes me think you have some reason,
To fear I may be otherwise than kind—
Is't so, my girl.
Virginia. Indeed I did not know
What I was saying to you !
Virginius. Why, that's worse
And worse ! What ! when you said your father's kindness
Made you so happy, am I to believe
You were not thinking of him ?
Virginia. I———— (*greatly confused.*)
Virginius. Go, fetch me
The latest task you did. [*Exit Virginia.*
It is enough.
Her artless speech, like crystal, shows the thing
'Twould hide, but only covers. 'Tis enough !
She loves, and fears her father may condemn.

Virginia, (re-entering with a painting.)
Here, Sir.
Virginius. What's this?
Virginia. 'Tis Homer's history
Of great Achilles parting from Briseis.
Virginius. You have done it well. The colouring is good,
The figures well design'd. 'Tis very well!—
Whose face is this you've given to Achilles?
Virginia. Whose face?
Virginius. I've seen this face! Tut! Tut! I know it
As well as I do my own, yet can't bethink me
Whose face it is!
Virginia. You mean Achilles' face?
Virginius. Did I not say so! 'Tis the very face
Of—No! No! Not of him. There's too much youth
And comeliness; and too much fire, to suit
The face of Siccius Dentatus.
Virginia. O!
You surely never took it for his face!
Virginius. Why, no; for now I look again, I'd swear
You lost the copy ere you drew the head,
And, to requite Achilles for the want
Of his own face, contriv'd to borrow one
From Lucius Icilius. (*Enter Dentatus.*) My Dentatus,
I am glad to see you!
Den. 'Tis not for my news, then.
Virginius. Your news! What news?
Den. More violence and wrong from these new masters of ours, our noble Decemvirs—these demi-gods of the good people of Rome! No man's property is safe from them. Nay, it appears we hold our wives and daughters but by the tenure of their will. Their liking is the law. The Senators themselves, scared at their audacious rule, withdraw themselves to

their villas and leave us to our fate. There are rumours, also, of new incursions by the Sabines.

Virginius. Rome never saw such days.

Den. And she'll see worse, unless I fail in my reckoning. Is that Virginia? I saw her not before. How does the fair Virginia? Why, she is quite a woman. I was just now wishing for a daughter.

Virginius. A plague you mean.

Den. I am sure you should not say so.

Virginia. Indeed he should not; and he does not say so,
Dentatus—not that I am not a plague,
But that he does not think me one, for all
I do to weary him. I am sure, Dentatus,
If to be thought to do well is to do well,
There's nothing I do ill; But it is far
From that! for few things do I as I ought—
Yet every thing is well done with my father,
Dentatus.

Virginius. That's well done, is it not my friend? (*Aside*)
But if you had a daughter, what would you do with her?

Den. I'd give her to Icilius. I should have been just now torn to pieces, but for his good offices. The gentle citizens, that are driven about by the Decemvir's Lictors, like a herd of tame oxen, and with most beast-like docility, only low applauses to them in return, would have done me the kindness to knock my brains out; but the noble Icilius bearded them singly, and railed them into temper. Had I a daughter worthy of such a husband, he should have such a wife, and a patrician's dower along with her.

Virginius. I wish to speak with you, Dentatus. Icilius is a young man whom I honor, but so far only as his conduct gives me warrant. He has had, as thou knowest, a principal hand in helping us to our Decemvirs. It may be that he is what I would gladly think him; but I must see him clearly,

clearly, Dentatus. "If he has acted with the remotest understanding, touching the views of these new tyrants that we are cursed withal, I disclaim him as my friend! I cast him off for ever!"

[*Exit Virginius and Dentatus.*

Virginia. How is it with my heart? I feel as one
That has lost every thing, and just before
Had nothing left to wish for! He will cast
Icilius off!—I never told it yet;
But take of me, thou gentle air, the secret—
And ever after breathe more balmy sweet—
I love Icilius! "Yes, although to thee
I fear to tell it, that hast neither eye
To scan my looks, nor voice to echo me,
Nor e'en an o'er-apt ear to catch my words;
Yet, sweet invisible confidant, my secret
Once being thine—I tell thee, and I tell thee
Again—and yet again." I love Icilius!
He'll cast Icilius off!—not if Icilius
Approve his honour. That he'll ever do;
He speaks and looks, and moves a thing of honour,
Or honour never yet spoke—look'd, or mov'd,
Or was a thing of earth. O, come Icilius;
Do but appear, and thou art vindicated.

ICILIUS, (*entering.*)

Virginia! sweet Virginia! sure I heard
My name pronounc'd. Was it by thee, Virginia?
Thou dost not answer? Then it was by thee—
O! wouldst thou tell me why thou nam'dst Icilius!

Virginia. My father is incens'd with thee. Dentatus
Has told him of the new Decemvirate,
How they abuse their office. You, he knows,
Have favoured their election, and he fears
May have some understanding of their plans.

Icil. He wrongs me then!

Virginia. I thank the gods!

Icil. For me!
Virginia? Do you thank the gods for me?
Your eye is moist—yet that may be for pity;
Your hand doth tremble—that may be for fear;
Your cheek is cover'd o'er with blushes! What,
O what can that be for?
Virginia. Icilius, leave me!
Icil. Leave thee, Virginia? O! a word—a word
Trembles upon my tongue, which, if it match
The thought that moves thee, now, and thou wilt let me
Pronounce that word, to speak that thought for thee,
I'll breathe—though I expire in the extacy
Of uttering it.
Virginia. Icilius, will you leave me?
Icil. Love! Love! Virginia! Love! If I have spoke
Thy thought aright, ne'er be it said again,
The heart requires more service than the tongue
Can, at its best, perform. My tongue hath serv'd
Two hearts—but, lest it should o'erboast itself,
Two hearts with but one thought. Virginia!
Virginia, speak—*(Virginia covers her face with her hands.)*
O, I have lov'd thee long:
So much the more extatic my delight,
To find thee mine at length.
Virginia. My secret's yours.
Keep it, and honour it, Icilius.

Enter VIRGINIUS *and* DENTATUS *behind.*

Virginius. Icilius here!
Virginia. I ask thee now to leave me.
Icilius. Leave thee! who leaves a treasure he has coveted
So long, and found so newly, ere he scans it
Again, and o'er again; and asks and answers,
Repeats and answers, answers and repeats,
The half-mistrustful, half-assured question—
And is it mine indeed?

Virginia. Indeed! indeed!
Now leave me.
Icilius. I must see thy father first,
And lay my soul before him.
Virginia. Not to-night.
Icil. Now worse than ever, dear Virginia;
Can I endure his doubts; I'll lay my soul
Naked before him—win his friendship quite,
Or lose myself for ever!
[*Going, is met by Virginius.*
Virginius. Stop, Icilius!
Thou seest that hand? It is a Roman's, boy;
'Tis sworn to liberty—It is the friend
Of honour.—Dost thou think so?
Icil. Do I think
Virginius owns that hand?
Virginius Then you'll believe
It has an oath deadly to tyranny,
And is the foe of falsehood! By the gods,
Knew it the lurking place of treason, though
It were a brother's heart, 'twould drag the caitiff
Forth. Dar'st thou take that hand?
Icil. I dare, Virginius.
Virginius. Then take it! Is it weak in thy embrace?
Returns it not thy gripe? Thou wilt not hold
Faster by it, than it will hold by thee!
I overheard thee say, thou was't resolv'd
To win my friendship quite---Thou cans't not win
What thou hast won already! You will stay
And sup with us to-night?—
Dent. To be sure he will!
Virginius. And, hark you, Sir,
At your convenient time, appoint a day
Your friends and kinsmen may confer with me---
There is a bargain I would strike with you.
Come, to the supper-room. Do you wait for me,
To lead Virginia in, or will you do it?
Come on, I say; come on. Your hand, Dentatus.
[*Exeunt.*

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE FIRST.

A STREET.

Enter PUBLIUS *and* SEXTUS.

Pub. This way! We muster at the Flaminian gate.

Sext. Shall we not wait for Decius?

Pub. No; were he ten times Decius.—They'll have already begun their march. Come on!

Enter NUMITORIUS.

Num. Do you belong to the fourth legion?

Pub. We do.

Num. They are upon their march, then.

Pub. I told you so—Come on! come on!

[*Exeunt Soldiers.*

Enter LUCIUS.

Luc. Numitorius, what soldiers were those that just now parted from you?

Num. Soldiers hastening to overtake the army, that's now upon its march.

Luc. 'Tis all confirmed then ; the Sabines are in force upon our borders.

Num. I pray you tell me something new ! Know you not the Senate has met, and the Decemvirs have come off triumphant in spite of all opposition ?

Luc. Should they have been opposed in such a strait as this ?

Num. Aye, should they. They dared not have armed a single citizen without the order of the Senate ; which, had they not obtained, the country would have been left naked to the foe, and then they had been forced to make room for more popular magistrates.

Luc. Why, were they not opposed then ?

Num. Did not I tell you they were opposed, Caius Claudius, Appius's own uncle, and Honorius, that noble senator, opposed them ; and it was like to go against them, but for the brawling insolence of Spurius Oppius, and the effrontery of the head Decemvir, backed by the young Patricians.

Luc. So they are empowered to take up arms ?

Num. To be sure they are ; and they have done so.—One body has already march'd, and by this time, no doubt, has come to blows with the enemy. The levy is still proceeding. All the Decemvirs, but Appius, take the field. He remains in Rome to keep good order that is the violater of all order. Why, where have you been, Lucius, to have felt no movement of so great and wide a stir ? Your brother meets Virginius at his house to-day.—Come with me thither, for you I know are bid.—Lucius, there's no huzzaing for your Decemvirs now.—Come on, we have outstaid the hour. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE SECOND.

VIRGINIUS's HOUSE.

Enter VIRGINIUS, ICILIUS, NUMITORIUS, LUCIUS, *and Others.*

Virginius. Welcome, Icilius! Welcome, friends! Icilius,
I did design to speak with you of feasting
And merriment, but war is now the word;
One that unlovingly keeps time with mirth,
Unless war's own—whene'er the battle's won,
And safe carousing, comrades drink to victory!

Icil. Virginius! have you chang'd your mind?

Virginius. My mind?
What mind? How now! Are you that boy, Icilius.
You set your heart so earnestly upon
A dish of poor confections, that to balk you
Makes you look blank! I did design to feast you
Together with your friends—The times are chang'd—
The march, the tent, the fight becomes us now!

Icil. Virginius!

Virginius. Well?

Icil. Virginius!

Virginius. How the boy
Reiterates my name.

Icil. There's not a hope
I have, but is the client of Virginius.

Virginius. Well, well! I only meant to put it off;
We'll have the revel yet! the board shall smoke!
The cup shall sparkle, and the jest shall soar
And mock us from the roof! Will that content you?
Not till the war be done tho'—Yet, ere then,
Some tongue, that now needs only wag, to make
The table ring, may have a tale to tell
So petrifying, that it cannot utter it!

I'll make all sure, that you may be my guest
At any rate—altho' you should be forc'd
To play the host for me and feast yourself.
Look here, (*shows a parchment to Icilius.*)
How think you? Will it meet the charge?
Will it not do? We want a witness tho'!
I'll bring one; whom if you approve, I'll sign
The bond. I'll wait upon you instantly. [*Exit.*

Luc. How feel you now, Icilius?

Icil. Like a man
Whom the next moment makes, or quite unmakes.
With the intensity of exquisite
Suspense, my breathing thickens, and my heart,
Beats heavily, and with remittant throb
As like to lose its action—See! my hope
Is bless'd! I live! I live!

Enter VIRGINIUS *conducting* VIRGINIA, *with* NUMITORIUS.

Virginius. You are my witnesses,
That this young creature I present to you,
I do pronounce—my profitably cherish'd,
And most deservedly beloved child;
My daughter, truly filial—both in word
And act—yet even more in act than word:
And—for the man who seeks to win her love,—
A virgin, from whose lips a soul as pure
Exhales, as e'er responded to the blessing
Breath'd in a parent's kiss (*kissing her.*) Icilius!
(*Icilius rushes towards Virginius and kneels.*)
Since
You are upon your knees, young man, look up;
And lift your hands to heaven—You will be all
Her father has been—added unto all
A lover would be!

Icilius. All that man should be
To woman, I will be to her!

Virginius. The oath
Is register'd! Didst thou but know, young man,
How fondly I have watch'd her, since the day
Her mother died, and left me to a charge
Of double duty bound—how she hath been
My ponder'd thought by day, my dream by night,
My prayer, my vow, "my offering, my praise"
My sweet companion, pupil, tutor, child!—
Thou would'st not wonder, that my drowning eye,
And choking utterance, upbraid my tongue
That tells thee, she is thine!—Icilius,
I do betroth her to thee; let but the war
Be done—you shall espouse her. Friends, a word!
[*Virginius and the rest retire.*

Icilius. Virginia! my Virginia! I am all
Dissolv'd—o'erpower'd with the munificence
Of this auspicious hour—And thou, nor mov'st
Nor look'st—nor speak'st—to bless me with a sign
Of sweet according joy!—I love thee, but
To make thee happy! If to make thee so
Be bliss denied to me—lo, I release
The gifted hand—that I would faster hold,
Than wretches, bound for death, would cling to life—
If thou would'st take it back—then take it back.

Virginia. I take it back—to give it thee again!

Icilius. O help me to a word will speak my bliss,
Or I am beggar'd—No! there is not one!
There cannot be; for never man had bliss
Like mine to name.

Virginia. "Thou dost but beggar me
Icilius, when thou mak'st thyself a bankrupt;
Placing a value on me far above
My real little worth."—I'd help thee to
A hundred words; each one of which, would far
O'er-rate thy gain, and yet no single one
Rate over high!

Icilius. Thou could'st not do it! No;
Thou could'st not do it! Every term of worth
Writ down and doubl'd, then the whole sum'd up,

Would leave with thee a rich remainder still!—
Pick from each rarer pattern of thy sex
Her rarest charm, till thou hast every charm
Of soul and body, that can blend in woman,
I would out-paragon the paragon
With thee!

Virginia. "And if thou would'st, I'd find thee, for
Thy paragon, a mate—if that can be
A mate which doth transcend the thing, 'tis ta'en
To match—would make thy paragon look poor,
And I would call that so o'ermatching mate
Icilius."

Icilius. No! I will not let thee win
On such a theme as this!

Virginia. Nor will I drop
The controversy, that the richer makes me
The more I lose.

Icilius. My sweet Virginia,
We do but lose and lose, and win and win;
"Playing for nothing but to lose and win."
Then let us stop the game—and thus I stop it.
(*Kisses her.*)

Re-enter VIRGINIUS, *and the Others.*

Virginius. Witness, my friends, that seal! Observe, it is
A living one! It is Icilius' seal;
And stamp'd upon as true and fair a bond—
Tho' it receive the impress blushingly—
As ever signet kiss'd! Are all content?
Speak else! She is thy free affianc'd wife,
Thou art her free affianc'd husband! Come,
We have o'erdrawn our time—Farewell, Virginia;
Thy future husband for a time must be
Bellona's. To thy tasks again, my child;
Be thou the bride of study for a time.
Farewell!

Virginia. My Father!

Virginius. May the gods protect thee.

Virginia. My Father.
Virginius. Does the blood forsake thy cheek?
Come to my arms once more! Remember, girl,
The first and foremost debt a Roman owes,
Is to his country; and it must be paid,
If need be, with his life—Why, how you hold me!
Icilius, take her from me! Hoa! Within!
Within there! Servia! (*Enter Servia.*)
Look to your child!
Come, boy.
Icilius. Farewell, Virginia.
Virginius. Take her in!
Virginia. The gods be with thee my Icilius—
Father,
The gods be with thee—and Icilius.
Virginius. I swear a battle might be fought and won
In half the time! Now, once for all, farewell;
Your sword and buckler, boy! The foe! The foe!
Does he not tread on Roman ground! Come on!
Come on, charge on him! drive him back! or die!
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE THIRD.

APPIUS's HOUSE.

Enter APPIUS.

It was a triumph, the achieving which,
O'erpaid the risk was run—and that was great.
They have made trial of their strength, and learn'd
Its value from defeat. The Senate knows
Its masters now; and the Decemvirate,
To make its reign eternal, only wants
Its own decree, which little pains will win.

Ere this, the foe has, for his mad invasion,
Been paid with chastisement. "Retir'd within
His proper limits, leisure waits upon us
To help us to the recompence, decreed
To our noble daring, who have set ourselves
In such high seats, as at our feet array
The wealth, and power, and dignity of Rome
In absolute subjection! Tyranny!
How godlike is thy port! Thou giv'st, and tak'st,
And ask'st no other leave, than what thy own
Imperial will accords. Jove does no more!"
Now Claudius—

Enter CLAUDIUS.

Claud. We have suffer'd a defeat!
App. What! The Decemvirs' fly!
Claud. The soldiers fight
With only half a heart. "The other half
Looks on, and cares not which side proves the winner."
App. Then decimate them. Traitors! Recreants!
Why, we shall have them at our very doors!
Have we lost ground, my Claudius?
Claud. None, except
What we've retrac'd in fame. We strove to teach
The enemy their road lay backwards, but
They would not turn their faces for us. Each
Retains his former line.

Enter MARCUS.

App. What news?
Marc. The Œqui
Still press upon us. Rumours are afloat
Of new disasters, which the common cry,
Be sure, still multiplies and swells. Dentatus,
That over-busy, crabbed veteran,
Walks up and down among the people, making

Your plans his theme of laughter. Naught he stints
That may reflect you in an odious light,
And lower the Decemvirate.

App. A dungeon
Would do good service to him! Once within,
Strangling were easy! We must stop his mouth—
"Unwholesome food—or liquor"—Where was he
When last you heard him?

Marc. In the Forum.

App. So!
He is past service, is he not? Some way
To clear the city of him. Come, we'll hear him,
And answer him, and silence him! 'Tis well
The dog barks forth his spleen; it puts us on
Our guard against his bite. Come, to the Forum!
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE FOURTH.

THE FORUM.

Enter DENTATUS *and* CITIZENS.

Tit. What's to be done?

Den. We'll be undone—that's to be done.

Ser. We'll do away with the Decemvirate.

Den. You'll do away with the Decemvirate?—The Decemvirate will do away with you! You'll do away with yourselves! Do nothing—The enemy will do away with both of you. In another month, a Roman will be a stranger in Rome. A fine pass we are come to, Masters!

Tit. But something must be done.

Den. Why, what would you have? You shout and clap your hands, as if it were a victory

you heard of; and yet you cry---Something must be done! Truly I know not what that something is, unless it be to make you General. How say you, Masters?

Ser. We'd follow any man that knew how to lead us, and would rid us of our foes, and the Decemvirate together.

Den. You made these Decemvirs! You are strangely discontented with your own work! And you are over-cunning workmen too---You put your materials so firmly together, there's no such thing as taking them asunder! What you build, you build —except it be for your own good.—There you are bunglers at your craft. Ha! ha! ha! I cannot but laugh to think how you toiled, and strained, and sweated, to rear the stones of the building one above another, when I see the sorry faces you make at it!

Tit. But tell us the news again.

Den. Is it so good? Does it so please you? Then prick your ears again, and listen.—We have been beaten again—beaten back on our own soil. Rome has seen its haughty masters fly before chastisement, like slaves---returning cries for blows---and all this of your Decemvirs, gentlemen.

1*st Cit.* Huzza for it again! (*The people shout.*)

2*nd Cit.* Hush! Appius comes.

Den. And do you care for that? You that were, just now, within a stride of taking him and his colleagues by the throat? You'll do away with the Decemvirs, will you! And let but one of them appear, you dare not, for your life, but keep your spleen within your teeth! Listen to me, now! I'll speak the more for Appius—(*Enter Appius, Claudius, and Marcus, preceded by Lictors.*)—I say, to the eternal infamy of Rome, the foe has chased her sons, like hares, on their own soil, where they should prey like lions—and so they would, had they not keepers to tame them.

App. What's that you are saying to the people, Siccius Dentatus?

Den. I am regaling them with the news.

App. The news?

Den. Ay, the news—the newest that can be had; and the more novel, because unlooked for. Who ever thought to see the eagle in the talons of the kite?

App. It is not well done in you, Dentatus, to chafe a sore. It makes it rankle. If your surgery has learned no better, it should keep its hands to itself! You have very little to do, to busy yourself after this fashion.

Den. I busy myself as I like, Appius Claudius.

App. I know you do, when you labour to spread disaffection among the people, and bring the Decemvirs into contempt.

Den. The Decemvirs bring themselves into contempt.

App. Ha! dare you say so?

Den. Dare! I have dared cry "Come on!" to a cohort of bearded warriors—Is it thy smooth face should appal me? Dare! it never yet flurried me to use my arm—Shall I not, think you, be at my ease, when I but wag my tongue? Dare, indeed!

App. Your grey hairs should keep company with honester speech!

Den. Shall I show you, Appius, the company they are wont to keep, Look here! and here (*uncovering his forehead and shewing scars.*) These are the vouchers of honest deeds—such is the speech with which my grey hairs keep company. I tell you, to your teeth, the Decemvirs bring themselves into contempt.

App. What, are they not serving their country at the head of her armies?

Den. They'd serve her better in the body of her armies! I'd name for thee, a hundred Centurions

would make better generals. A common soldier of a year's active service would take his measures better. Generals! Our generals were wont to teach us how to win battles.—Tactics are changed—Your generals instruct us how to lose them.

App. Do you see my lictors?

Den. There are twelve of them.

App. What, if I bid them seize thee?

Den. They'd blush to do it.

App. Why now, Dentatus, I begin to know you;
I fancied you a man that lov'd to vent
His causeless anger in an under breath,
And speak it in the ear—and only then
When there was safety! Such a one, you'll own,
Is dangerous; and, to be trusted as
A friend or foe, unworthy. But I see
You rail to faces—Have you not so much
Respect for Appius as to take him by
The hand—when he confesses you have some
Pretence to quarrel with his colleagues plans,
And find fault with himself? Which, yet you'll own,
May quite as well be kindly done, Dentatus,
As harshly—Had you only to myself,
Declar'd your discontents, the more you had rail'd,
The more I should have thank'd you.

Den. Had I thought——

App. And have you been campaigning then so long,
And prosperously? and mistrust you Siccius,
That a young scarless soldier, like myself,
Would listen to your tutoring? See, now,
How much you have mistaken me! Dentatus,
In a word—Can you assist the generals;
And will you?

Den. I have all the will—but as
For the ability—

App. Tut! Tut! Dentatus
You vex me now! This coyness sits not well on you.

You know as well as I, you have as much
Ability as will. I would not think you
A man that lov'd to find fault, but to find fault!
Surely the evil you complain of, you
Would lend a hand to remedy! See, now,
'Tis fairly put to you—what say you?
Den. Appius!
You may use me as you please.
App. And that will be,
As you deserve! I'll send you, as my Legate,
To the army! (*Shout from the people.*) Do you
hear your friends, Dentatus?
A lucky omen that! Away! Away!
Apprise your house—prepare for setting out.
I'll hurrry your credentials—Minutes now
Rate high as hours! Assist my colleagues with
Your counsel; if their plans displease you, why
Correct them—change them—utterly reject them;
And if you meet obstruction—notice me,
And I will push it by—There now! Your hand!—
Again! Away! All the success attend you,
That Appius wishes you!
Den. Success is from
The Gods; whose hand soe'er it pleases them
To send it by—I know not what success
'Tis Appius' wish they send;—but this I know—
I am a soldier; and, as a soldier, I
Am bound to serve. All the success I ask,
Is that which benefits my country, Appius;
[*Exit Dentatus.*
App. You have serv'd her overlong! (*aside*) Now
for our causes.

Appius ascends the Tribunal.

Claud. (*to Marcus.*) Do you see the drift of
this?
Marc. I cannot guess it.
Claud. Nor I.

App. (*to a Plebeian*) Are you the suitor in this cause?
Speak!
Plebeian. Noble Appius, if there's law in Rome
To right a man most injur'd, to that law
Against yon proud Patrician I appeal.
App. No more of that, I say! Because he's rich
And great, you call him proud! 'Tis not unlike,
Because you're poor and mean; you call yourself
Injur'd—Relate your story; and so please you,
Spare epithets!
Plebeian. Grant me a minute's pause,
I shall begin.
(*Virginia at this moment crosses the stage with her Nurse, and is met by Numitorius who holds her in conversation; Appius rivets his eyes upon her.*)
Num. You have heard the news?
Virginia. What news? dear uncle!
Num. Step
Aside with me, I'll tell you.
(*Takes her a little farther from the tribunal.*)
App. Can it be
A mortal that I look upon?
Virginia. They are safe!
I thank the gods!
App. Her eyes look up to heaven
Like something kindred to it—rather made
To send their glances down, and fill the earth
With worship and with gratulation—What
A thrill runs up and down my veins; and all throughout me!
Plebeian. Now, most noble Appius—
App. Stop;
Put off the cause, I cannot hear it now!
Attend to-morrow! An oppressive closeness
Allows me not to breathe—Lictors! make clear
The ground about the Rostrum!
(*Descends and approaches Claudius with precipitation.*)

Claudius! Claudius!—
Marcus, go you and summon my physician
To be at home before me [*Exit Marcus.*] Claudius!
Claudius! there! there!
Virginia. You send a messenger to-night?
App. Paint me that smile! I never saw a smile
'Till now. My Claudius, is she not a wonder?
I know not whether in the state of girlhood
Or womanhood to call her.—'Twixt the two
She stands, as that were loth to lose her, this
To win her most impatient. The young year,
Trembling and blushing 'twixt the striving kisses
Of parting spring, and meeting summer, seems
Her only parallel!
Num. 'Tis well! I'll send
Your father word of this. But have you not
A message to Icilius?
App. Mark you, Claudius?
There is a blush!—I must possess her.
Virginia. Tell him,
I think upon him—Farewell Numitorius!
[*Exit with Servia.*
Num. Farewell, Virginia.
Claud. Master, will you tell me
The name of that young maiden?
Num. She is call'd
Virginia, daughter of Virginius;
A Roman citizen, and a centurion
In the army.
Claudius. Thank you; she is very like
The daughter of a friend of mine. Farewell.
Num. Farewell! [*Exit.*
App. I burn, my Claudius! brain and heart—
There's not
A fibre in my body but's on fire!
With what a gait she moves! Such was not Hebe,
Or Jupiter had sooner lost his heaven,
Than changed his cup-bearer—a step like that

The rapture glowing clouds might well bear up,
And never take for human! Find me, Claudius,
Some way to compass the possession of her.

Claud. 'Tis difficult—Her father's of repute;
The highest of his class.

App. I guessed it! Friends
Are ever friends, except when friends are needed.

Claud. Nay, Appius!—

App. If thou can'st not give me hope,
Be dumb!

Claud. A female agent may be used
With some success.

App. How? How?

Claud. To tamper with
That woman that attends her.

App. Set about it.

Claud. Could she but be induc'd to help you to
A single meeting with her.

App. Claudius! Claudius!
Effect but that!

Claud. I'll instantly about it.

App. Spare not my gold—nor stop at promises.
I will fulfil them fast as thou can'st make them.
To purchase such a draught of extacy
I'd drain a kingdom—Set about it, Claudius!
Away! I will not eat, nor drink, nor sleep,
Until I hear from thee!

Claud. Depend upon me!

App. I do, my Claudius, for my life—my life!

[*Exeunt severally.*

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

SCENE FIRST.

APPIUS'S HOUSE.

APPIUS—(*Entering.*)

It is not love, if what I've felt before
And call'd by such a name, be love—a thing
That took its turn—that I could entertain,
Put off, or humour—'tis some other thing ;
Or if the same, why in some other state—
Or I am not the same—or it hath found
Some other part of sensibility
More quick, whereon to try its power, and there
Expends it all ! Now, Claudius, your success ?

Enter CLAUDIUS.

Claud. Nothing would do, yet nothing left undone !
She was not to be purchas'd.
App. Did she guess—
Claud. She could not,
So guarded was my agent ; who describ'd you
A man of power, of noble family,
And regal fortune—one that ask'd not what
His pleasures cost—no further made disclosure.

App. And did it nothing move her, Claudius?
Claud. Nothing.
The more my agent urg'd, the more the shrunk
And wither'd hag grew callous; further press'd,
And with more urgent importuning, ire
And scorn, in imprecations and invectives
Vented upon the monster (as she call'd him)
That would pollute her child, compell'd my advocate
To drop the suit she saw was hopeless.
App. Now
Had I a friend indeed!
Claud. Has Appius need
To search for such a friend, and Claudius by him?
App. Friends ever are provisionally friends—
Friends for so far—Friends just to such a point
And then "farewell!" friends with an understanding—
As "should the road be pretty safe"—"the sea
Not over-rough," and so on—friends of *ifs*
And *buts*—no friends!—O could I find the man
Would be a simple, thorough-going friend!
Claud. I thought you had one, Appius.
App. So thought Appius,
Till Appius thought upon a test of friendship,
He fears he would not give unto himself,
Could he be Appius' friend.
Claud. Then Appius has
A truer friend than Appius is to Appius.
I'll give that test!
App. What! you'd remove her father
And that Icilius whom you told me of?
Claud. Count it as done.
App. My Claudius, is it true?
Can I believe it? art thou such a friend,
That, when I look'd for thee to stop and leave me,
I find thee keeping with me, step by step;
And even in thy loving eagerness

Outstriding me? I do not want thee, Claudius,
To soil thy hand with their Plebeian blood.
Claud. What would'st thou, then?
App. I was left guardian to thee—
Claud. Thou wast.
App. Among the various property
Thy father left, were many female slaves.
Claud. Well?
App. It were easy for thee, (were it not?)
To invent a tale that one of them confess'd
She had sold a female infant (and of course
Thy slave) unto Virginius' wife, who pass'd it
Upon Virginius as his daughter, which
Supposititious offspring is this same
Virginia?
Claud. I conceive you.
App. To induce
The woman to confirm your tale, would ask
But small persuasion. Is it done?
Claud. This hour.
I know the school, my Appius, where Virginia
Pursues her studies; thither I'll repair,
And seize her as my slave at once. Do thou
Repair to thy tribunal, whither, should
Her friends molest me in the attempt, I'll bring her,
And plead my cause before thee.
App. Claudius! Claudius!
How shall I pay thee? O, thou noble friend!
Power, fortune, life, whate'er belongs to Appius,
Reckon as thine! Away, away, my Claudius!
[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE SECOND.

A STREET IN ROME.

Enter LUCIUS, *meeting* TITUS, SERVIUS, *and* CNEIUS.

Luc. Well, Masters, any news of Siccius Dentatus from the camp; how he was received by the Decemvirs?

Tit. He was received well by the Decemvirs.

Cne. It wasn't then for the love they bear him.

Tit. But they expect he'll help them to return the cuffs they have gotten from the enemy.

Servius. Do you wish for a victory?

Luc. Yes, if Dentatus wins it. 'Tis to our credit, Masters—He's one of us.

Servius. And is not Spurius Oppius one of us?

Luc. He is; but he is in league with the patricians—"that is, the patrician Decemvirs." He is but half a plebeian, and that is the worse half.—"The better half he threw away when he became half a patrician." I never lik'd your half-and-half gentry; they generally combine the bad of both kinds, without the good of either.

Servius. Well, we shall have news presently. Your brother, Icilius, has just arrived with despatches from the camp. I met him passing through the Forum, and asked him what news he brought? He answered, none; but added, we might look for news of another kind than what we had been lately accustomed to hear. (*A shriek without.*)

Cne. What's that?

Tit. Look yonder, Masters! See!

Servius. 'Tis Appius's client dragging a young woman along with him.

Tit. Let us stand by each other, Masters, and prevent him.

Enter CLAUDIUS *dragging along* VIRGINIA, *followed by Servia and others.*

Servia. Help! help! help!
Luc. Let go your hold!
Claud. Stand by!
She is my slave!
Servia. His slave? Help! help! His slave?---
He looks more like a slave than she! Good Masters!
Protect the daughter of Virginius!
Luc. Release the maid.
Tit. Forbear this violence.
Claud. I call for the assistance of the laws;
She is my slave.
Servia. She is my daughter, Masters,
My foster-daughter; and her mother was
A free-born woman—and her father is
A citizen, a Roman—good Virginius,
As I said before—Virginius, the Centurion,
Whom all of you must know.—Help! help!
I say,
You see she cannot speak to help herself;
Speak for her, Masters—help her, if you're men!
Tit. Let go your hold.
Claud. Obstruct me at your peril.
Luc. We'll make you, if you will not.
Claud. Let me pass.
Servius. Let go your hold, once more.
Claud. Gook Masters! patience—
Hear me, I say—She is my slave—I wish not
To use this violence, my friends; but may not
A master seize upon his slave?—Make way,
Or such of you as are dissatisfied,

Repair with me to the Decemvir.—Come,
I only want my right!
Tit. Come on then!
Servius. Ay,
To the Decemvir!
Servia. Run, run for Numitorius—alarm our neighbours!—Call out Icilius's friends!—I shall go mad! Help! help! help! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE THIRD.

THE FORUM.

Enter APPIUS, *preceded by Lictors.*

App. Will he succeed?—Will he attempt it?—
Will he
Go through with it?—(*Looking out*)—No sign—I almost wish
He had not undertaken it; yet wish
More than I wish for life, he may accomplish
What he has undertaken. O! the pause
That precedes action! It is vacancy
That o'erweighs action's substance. What I fear
Is, that his courage can't withstand her tears;
That will be sure to try and succour her;
Pointing, as 'twere, to every charm, and pleading
With melting eloquence. I hear a sound
As of approaching clamour—and the rush
Of distant feet—He comes! I must prepare
For his reception. (*Appius ascends the tribunal. Claudius enters still holding Virgina, followed by Servia, women and citizens.*)
Claud. Do not press upon me;
Here's the Decemvir—he will satisfy you,

Whether a master has a right or not
To seize his slave when he finds her.
Servia. She is no slave
Of thine! She never was a slave! Thou slave!
To call her by that name—Ay! threaten me!
She is a free-born maid, and not a slave,
Or never was a free-born maid in Rome!
O! you shall dearly answer for it!
App. Peace!
What quarrel's this? Speak, those who are aggriev'd.

Enter NUMITORIUS.

Num. Where is Virginia—Wherefore do you hold
That maiden's hand?
Claud. Who asks the question?
Num. I! Her uncle Numitorius!
Claud. Numitorius, you think yourself her uncle—Numitorius
No blood of yours flows in her veins, to give you
The title you would claim. Most noble Appius!
If you sit here for justice—as I think
You do, attend not to the clamour of
This man, who calls himself this damsel's *uncle*.
She is my property—was born beneath
My father's roof, whose slave her mother was,
Who (as I can establish past dispute)
Sold her an infant to Virginius' wife,
Who never had a child, and heavily
Revolv'd her barrenness. My slave I have found
And seiz'd—as who that finds his own (no matter
How long so ever miss'd) should fear to take it?
If they oppose my claim, they may produce
Their counter-proofs and bring the cause to trial!
But till they prove mine own is not mine own—
(An undertaking somewhat perilous)
Mine own I shall retain—yet giving them
Should they demand it, what security
They please for re-producing her.

App. Why that
Would be but reasonable.
Num. Reasonable!
Claudius!—(*with much vehemence—recollects himself*)
He's but a mask upon the face
Of some more powerful contriver. (*aside*) Appius,
My niece's father, is from Rome thou know'st,
Serving his country. Is it not unjust,
In the absence of a citizen, to suffer
His right to his own child to be disputed?
Grant us a day to fetch Virginius,
That he himself may answer this most foul
And novel suit—Meanwhile to me belongs
The custody of the maid—her uncle's house
Can better answer for her honour than
The house of Claudius. 'Tis the law of Rome
Before a final sentence, the defendant
In his possession is not to sustain
Disturbance from the plaintiff.
Tit. A just law.
Servius. And a most reasonable demand.
All the Cits. Ay! Ay! Ay!
App. Silence, you Citizens; will you restrain
Your tongues, and give your magistrate permission
To speak? The law is just—most reasonable—
I fram'd that law myself—I will protect
That law!
Tit. "Most noble Appius!"
Servius. "A most just decree!"
All the Cits. "Ay! Ay!"
App. "Will you be silent? Will you please to wait
For my decree, you most untractable
And boisterous citizens! I do repeat it,"
I fram'd that law myself and will protect it.
But are you, Numitorius, here defendant?
That title, none but the reputed father
Of the young woman has a right to—How

Can I commit to thee what may appear
The plaintiff's property ; and if not his,
Still is not thine ? I'll give thee till to-morrow
Ere I pass a final judgment—But the girl
Remains with Claudius, who shall bind himself
In such security as you require,
To re-produce her at the claim of him
Who calls her daughter—This is my decree.

Num. A foul decree.—Shame ! shame !

Servius. Aye, a most foul decree.

Cne. A villainous decree.

Servius. Most villainous.

Servia. Good citizens, what do you with our weapons,
When you should use your own ? Your hands !—your hands !—
He shall not take her from us.
Gather round her,
And if he touch her, be it to his cost ;
And if ye see him touch her, never more
Expect from us your titles—never more
Be husbands, brothers, lovers, at our mouths,
Or any thing that doth imply the name
Of men—except such men as men should blush for.

App. Command your wives and daughters, citizens,
They quit the Forum.

Servia. They shall not command us,
That care not to protect us.

App. Take the girl,
If she is yours.

Claud. Stand by.

Virginia. O help me ! help me !

Icil. (*entering*) Virginia's voice.—Virginia!
(*Rushes to her.*)

Virginia. O, Icilius ! (*Falls fainting in his arms.*)

Icil. Take her, good Numitorius.

App. You had better

Withdraw, Icilius; the affair is judged.
Claud. I claim my slave.
Icil. Stand back, thou double slave!
Touch her, and I will tear thee, limb from limb,
Before thy master's face.—She is my wife,
My life, my heart, my heart's blood.—Touch her
With but a look——
App. My Lictors, there, advance!
See that Icilius quits the Forum.—Claudius,
Secure your slave.
Icil. Lictors, a moment pause
For your own sakes. Do not mistake these arms;
Think not the strength of any common man
Is that they feel. They serve a charmed frame,
The which a power pervades, that ten times trebles
The natural energy of each single nerve
To sweep you down as reeds.
App. Obey my orders!
Icil. Appius! before I quit the Forum, let me
Address a word to you.
App. Be brief, then!
Icil. I'st not enough you have depriv'd us, Appius,
Of the two strongest bulwarks to our liberties,
Our tribunes and our privilege of appeal
To the assembly of the people?—Cannot
The honour of the Roman maids be safe?
Thou know'st this virgin is betroth'd to me,
Wife of my hope—Thou shalt not cross my hope
And I retain my life—attempt it not!—
I stand among my fellow citizens—
His fellow-soldiers hem Virginius round,
Both men and gods are on our side; but grant
I stood alone, with nought but virtuous love
To hearten me—alone would I defeat
The execution of thy infamous
Decree! I'll quit the Forum now, but not
Alone—my love!—my wife! my free-born maid—
The virgin standard of my pride and manhood

" Of peerless motto !---rich and fresh, and shining,
And of device most rare and glorious"---
I'll bear off safe with me---unstain'd---untouch'd !

App. Your duty, Lictors---Claudius, look to your right.

Icil. True citizens !

Tit. Down with the traitor !

Ser. Down with him---slay him !

[*The Lictors and Claudius are driven back; Claudius takes refuge at Appius's feet, who has descended and throws up his arms as a signal to both parties to desist---whereupon the people retire a little.*]

App. So, friends ! we thank you that you don't deprive us
Of every thing ; but leave your magistrates,
At least their persons, sacred---their decrees,
It seems, you value as you value straws,
And in like manner break them. Wherefore stop
When you have gone so far ? You might, methinks,
As well have kill'd my client at my feet,
As threaten him with death before my face!
Rise, Claudius ! I perceive Icilius' aim :—
He labours to restore the tribuneship
By means of a sedition. We'll not give him
The least pretence of quarrel. We shall wait
Virginius's arrival 'till to-morrow.
His friends take care to notice him---The camp's
But four hours journey from the city. 'Till
To-morrow, then, let me prevail with you
To yield up something of your right, and let
The girl remain at liberty.

Claud. If they
Produce security for her appearance,
I am content.

Tit. I'll be your security.

Servius. And I.

Citizens. We'll all be your security.
(*they hold up their hands.*)

Icil. My friends,
And fellow citizens, I thank you; but
Reserve your kindness for to-morrow, friends,
If Claudius still persist—To-day I hope
He will remain content with my security,
And that of Numitorius, for the maid's
Appearance

App. See, she do appear!—and come
Prepar'd to pay the laws more reverence,
As I shall surely see that they receive it.
[*Exeunt Appius, Claudius and Lictors.*

Icil. Look up! look up! my sweet Virginia,
Look up! look up! you will see none but friends.
O that such eyes should e'er meet other prospect!

Virginia. Icilius! Uncle! lead me home! Icilius,
You did not think to take a slave to wife?

Icil. I thought, and think to wed a free-born maid;
And thou, and thou alone, art she, Virginia!

Virginia. I feel as I were so—I do not think
I am his slave! Virginius not my father!
Virginius, my dear father, not my father!
It cannot be; my life must come from him;
For, make him not my father, it will go
From me.—I could not live, an he were not
My father.

Icil. Dear Virginia, calm thy thoughts—
But who shall warn Virginius?

Num. I've ta'en care
Of that; no sooner heard I of this claim,
Than I dispatch'd thy brother Lucius,
Together with my son, to bring Virginius,
With all the speed they could; and caution'd them
(As he is something over quick of temper,
And might snatch justice, rather than sue for it)
To evade communication of the cause,

And merely say his presence was required,
'Till we should have him with us. Come, Virginia;
Thy uncle's house shall guard thee, till thou find'st
Within thy father's arms a citadel,
Whence Claudius cannot take thee.
Icil. He shall take
A thousand lives first.
Tit. Ay, ten thousand lives.
Icil. Hear you, Virginia! Do you hear your friends?
Virginia. Let him take my life first, I am content
To be his slave then—if I am his slave.
Icil. Thou art a free-born Roman maid, Virginia;
All Rome doth know thee so, Virginia—
All Rome will see thee so.
Citizens. We will! We will!
Icil. You'll meet us here to-morrow?
Citizens. All! all!
Icil. Cease not to clamour 'gainst this outrage. Tell it
In every corner of the city; and
Let no man call himself a son of Rome,
Who stands aloof when tyranny assails
Her fairest daughter. Come, Virginia,
'Tis not a private, but a common wrong;
'Tis every father's, lover's, freeman's cause;
To-morrow! fellow citizens, to-morrow!
Citizens. To-morrow! [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE FOURTH.

THE CAMP.

Enter S. Oppius *and* Q. F. Vibulanus.

Opp. Has he set out?
Vibul. He has, my Oppius

And never to return! His guard 's instructed
To take good care of him. There's not a man
But's ten times sold to us, and of our wishes
Fully possess'd. Dentatus will no more
Obstruct us in our plans. He did not like
The scite of our encampment. He will find
At least the air of it was wholesome.

Opp. What
Report are they instructed to bring back?

Vibul. They fell into an ambush.---He was slain.

Opp. But should the truth, by any means, come out.

Vibul. Imprison them, and secretly despatch them;
Or ope' the dungeon doors, and let them 'scape.

Opp. I should prefer the latter method.

Vibul. Well,
That be our choice. But when it is determined
To spill blood otherwise than as it may
Be spill'd, to hesitate about some drops
Is weakness, may be fatal.---Come, my friend,
Let us be seen about the camp, and ready,
With most admiring ear, to catch the tidings,
Will be the wonder of all ears, but ours.
Here's one anticipates us!

Enter MARCUS.

Well, your news?

Marc. Dentatus is no more! but he has dearly sold his life. The matter has been reported as you directed. By few it is received with credence---by many with doubt; while some bold spirits stop not at muttering, but loudly speak suspicion of foul play. A party that we met, a mile beyond the lines, no sooner heard our story, than they set off to bring the body to the camp. Others have followed them. Fabius we have your gage for safety.

Vibul. You have.---Come, let us show ourselves.
---Guilt hides,

And we must wear the port of innocence,
That more than half way meets accusal.—Come.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE FIFTH.

A MOUNTAINOUS PASS.

The body of Dentatus discovered on a bier—Soldiers mourning over it.

Trumpets—Enter VIRGINIUS *and* SOLDIERS.

Virginius. Where is Dentatus? Where is the gallant soldier?
Ah, Comrade! comrade! warm! yet warm! So lately
Gone, when I would have given the world, only
To say farewell to thee, or even get
A parting look! O gallant, gallant soldier,
The god of war might sure have spar'd a head
Grown grey in serving him! My brave old comrade!
The father of the field! Thy silver locks
Other anointing should receive, than what
Their masters' blood could furnish!

1*st. Soldier.* There has been treachery here!

Virginius. What!

1*st. Soldier.* The slain are all our own. None of the bodies are stripp'd—These are all Romans. There is not the slightest trace of an enemy's retreat—And now I remember they made a sudden halt, when we came in sight of them at the foot of the mountain—Mark'd you not, too, with what confused haste they told their story, directed us, and hurried on to the camp?

Virginius. Revenge! The Decemvirs! Ay, the Decemvirs!
For every drop of blood thou shalt have ten,
Dentatus!
Luc. (*without*) What hoa! Virginius! Virginius!
Virginius. Here! here!
Luc. (*entering*) 'Tis well you're found, Virginius!
Virginius. What makes you from the city! Look!
My Lucius, what a sight you've come to witness.
My brave old comrade! Honest Siccius!
"Siccius Dentatus, that true son of Rome,
On whose white locks the mother look'd more proudly
Than on the raven ones of her youngest and
Most hopeful sons, is nothing now but this,
The sign and token of himself!" Look, comrades,
Here are the foes have slain him! Not a trace
Of any other---not a body stripp'd--
Our father has been murdered—We'll revenge him
Like sons! Take up the body! Bear it to
The camp; and as you move your solemn march,
Be dumb—or if you speak, be it but a word;
And be that word---Revenge!

(*The Soldiers bear off the body---Virginius following is stopp'd by Lucius.*)

Luc. Virginius!
Virginius. I did not mind thee, Lucius!
Uncommon things make common things forgot.
Hast thou a message for me, Lucius? Well!
I'll stay and hear it---but be brief; my heart
Follows my poor Dentatus.
Luc. You are wanted
In Rome,
Virginius. On what account?
Luc. On your arrival
You'll learn.

Virginius. How! is it something can't be told
At once? Speak out boy! Ha! Your looks are loaded
With matter---I'st so heavy that your tongue
Cannot unburden them? Your brother left
The camp on duty yesterday---hath ought
Happen'd to him? Did he arrive in safety?
Is he safe? Is he well?

Luc. He is both safe and well.

Virginius. What then? What then? Tell me the matter, Lucius.

Luc. I have said
It shall be told you.

Virginius. Shall! I stay not for
That shall, unless it be so close at hand
It stop me not a moment.—'Tis too long
A coming. Fare you well, my Lucius.

Luc. Stay
Virginius.—Hear me then with patience.

Virginius. Well,
I am patient.

Luc. Your Virginia——

Virginius. Stop, my Lucius!
I am cold in every member of my frame!
If 'tis prophetic, Lucius, of thy news,
Give me such token as her tomb would, Lucius---
I'll bear it better.—Silence.

Luc. You are still ——

Virginia. I thank thee, Jupiter!---I am still a father!

Luc. You are, Virginius, yet.

Virginius. What, is she sick?

Luc. No.

Virginius. Neither dead nor sick! All well! No harm!
Nothing amiss! Each guarded quarter safe,
That fear may lay him down and sleep, and yet
This sounding the alarm! I swear thou tell'st

A story strangely.---Out with't! I have patience
For any thing, since my Virginia lives,
And lives in health!
Luc. You are requir'd in Rome
To answer a most novel suit.
Virginius. Whose suit?
Luc. The suit of Claudius.
Virginius. Claudius!
Luc. Him that's client
To Appius Claudius, the Decemvir.
Virginius. What!
That pander! Ha! Virginia! you appear
To couple them. What makes my fair Virginia
In company with Claudius? Innocence
Beside lasciviousness! His suit! What suit?---
Answer me quickly!---Quickly! lest suspense,
Beyond what patience can endure, coercing,
Drive reason from his seat!
Luc. He has claim'd Virginia.
Virginius. Claim'd her! Claim'd her!
On what pretence?
Luc. He says she is the child
Of a slave of his, who sold her to thy wife.
Virginia. Go on, you see I'm calm.
Luc. He seiz'd her in
The school, and dragg'd her to the Forum, where
Appius was giving judgment.
Virginius. Dragg'd her to
The Forum! Well?---I told you, Lucius,
I would be patient.
Luc. Numitorius there confronted him!
Virginius. Did he not strike him dead?
True, true, I know it was in presence of
The Decemvir---O! had I confronted him!
Well! well! The issue—Well!---O'erleap all else,
And light upon the issue! Where is she?
Luc. I was despatch'd to fetch thee, ere I could
learn.

Virginius. The claim of Claudius—Appius's
client—Ha!
I see the master cloud—this ragged one,
That lowers before, moves only in subservience
To the ascendant of the other—Jove
With its own mischief, break it, and disperse it,
And that be all the ruin! Patience! Prudence!
Nay prudence, but no patience.—Come! a slave
Dragg'd through the streets in open day! my child!
My daughter! my fair daughter, in the eyes
Of Rome! O! I'll be patient. Come! The essence
Of my best blood in the free common ear
Condemn'd as vile! O! I'll be patient. Come,
O they shall wonder.—I will be so patient.
[*Exeunt.*

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

ACT IV.

SCENE FIRST.

NUMITORIUS'S HOUSE.

VIRGINIA *discovered, supported by* SERVIA.

Virginia. Is he not yet arriv'd? Will he not come?
Servia. He surely will.
Virginia. He surely will! More surely
He had arriv'd already, had he known
How he is wanted—"They have miss'd him, Servia!
Don't tell me, but I know they have, or surely
We had not now been looking for him." Where's
My uncle?
Servia. Finding you had fallen asleep
After such watching, he went forth to hear
If there were any tidings of Virginius.
He's here.

Enter NUMITORIUS, *Virginia looks at him inquisitively for some time.*

Virginia. Not come! not come! I am sure of it!
He will not come! Do you not think he'll come?
Will not my father come? What think you, uncle?
Speak to me, speak—O give me any words,
Rather than what looks utter!

Numitorius. Be compos'd!
I hope he'll come!
Virginia. A little while ago
You were sure of it—from certainty to hope
Is a poor step; you hope he'll come—One hope,
One little hope to face a thousand fears!
"Do you not know he'll come? O uncle, wherefore
Do you not know he'll come? Had I been you
I had made sure of it.
Numitorius. All has been done
That could be done.
Virginia. Poor all that does so little!
One would imagine little needs be done
To bring a father to the succour of
His child!" 'Tis near the time!
Numitorius. It is indeed!
Virginia. Must I go forth with you? Must I again
Be dragg'd along by Claudius as his slave,
And none again to succour me? Icilius!
Icilius! Does your true betrothed wife
Call on you, and you hear not? My Icilius!
Am I to be your wife or Claudius' slave?
Where—where are you Icilius?
ICILIUS (*entering*). My Virginia!
What's to be done, my friend? 'tis almost time.
[*To Numitorius.*
Virginia. I hear what you are saying—it is time—
"O who could have believed it, that Icilius
Should ever say 'twas time to yield me to
Another's claim"—And will you give me up?
Can you devise no means to keep me from him?
Could we not fly?
[*Icilius looks earnestly at Numitorius, who fixes his eyes stedfastly on the ground: Icilius droops his head.*
I see!—your pledge

Must be redeem'd, although it cost you your
Virginia.
Virginius (without). Is she here?
Virginia. Ah!
[*Shrieks and rushes into her father's arms, who enters at the moment.*
Virginius. My child! My child!
Virginia. I am! I feel I am! I know I am!
My father! my dear father. "I despair'd
Of seeing you!" You're come! and come in time.
And, O! how much the more in time, when hope
Had given you up. "O! welcome, welcome foot,
Whose wished step is heard when least expected!"
Virginius. Brother! Icilius! thank you! thank you.—All
Has been communicated to me. Ay!
And would they take thee from me? Let them try it!
You've ta'en your measures well—I scarce could pass
Along, so was I check'd by loving hands
Ready to serve me. Hands with hearts in them!
So thou art Claudius' slave? And if thou art,
I'm surely not thy father! Blister'd villain!
You have warn'd our neighbours, have you not, to attend
As witnesses? To be sure you have. A fool
To ask the question. Dragg'd along the streets too!
'Twas very kind in him to go himself
And fetch thee—such an honour should not pass
Without acknowledgment. I shall return it
In full! In full!
Numitorius. Pray you be prudent, brother.
Virginia. Dear father, be advis'd—Will you not, father?
Virginius. I never saw you look so like your mother
In all my life!
Virginia. You'll be advis'd, dear father?

Virginius. It was her soul—her soul, that play'd just then
About the features of her child, and lit them
Into the likeness of her own. When first
She plac'd thee in my arms—I recollect it
As a thing of yesterday!—she wish'd, she said,
That it had been a man. I answer'd her,
It was the mother of a race of men,
And paid her for thee with a kiss. Her lips
Are cold now—could they but be warm'd again
How they would clamour for thee!
Virginia. My dear father,
You do not answer me! Will you not be advis'd?
Virginius. I will not take him by the throat and strangle him!
But I could do it! I could do it! Fear not:
I will not strike while any head I love
Is in the way. It is not now a time
To tell thee—but, would'st thou believe it!—honest
Siccius Dentatus has been murder'd by them.
Icilius. Murder'd!
Numitorius. Dentatus murder'd!
Virginia. O! how much
Have we to fear.
Virginius. We have the less to fear.
I spread the news at every step—A fire
Is kindled, that will blaze at but a breath
Into the fiercest flame!
Numitorius. 'Tis time. Let's haste
To the Forum.
Virginius. Let the Forum wait for us!
Put on no show of fear, when villany
Would wrestle with you! It can keep its feet
Only with cowards! I shall walk along
Slowly and calmly, with my daughter thus
In my hand: though with another kind of gripe
Than that which Claudius gave her. Well, I say,
I'll walk along thus, in the eyes of Rome.
Go you before, and what appeal soe'er

You please, make you to rouse up friends. For me,
I shall be mute—my eloquence is here—
Her tears—her youth—her innocence—her beauty!
If orators like these can't move the heart,
Tongues surely may be dumb.
Icilius. A thousand hearts
Have spoke already in her cause!
Virginius. Come on!
Fear not! it is your father's grasp you feel.
O he'll be strong as never man was, that
Will take thee from it. Come, Virginia;
We trust our cause to Rome and to the gods!
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE THIRD.

THE FORUM.

Enter APPIUS *and* LICTORS.

Appius. See you keep back the people! Use your fasces
With firmer hands, or hearts. Your hands are firm
Enough, would but your hearts perform their office,
" And leave your hands at liberty, not hang
Upon them with unseemly fears and clamours!"
Look to it! " Time! hadst thou the theme that I have
For speed, thou would'st not move this cripple's gait:
But there's no urging thee, and thou wast ever
Dull fellow traveller to young Impatience,
Dragging him back upon the road he pants
To run, but cannot find without thee."
[*Enter Marcus.*
Well?
Marcus. News has arriv'd, that speaks as if Dentatus

Was murder'd by the order of your colleagues!
There's not a face I meet but lowers with it:
The streets are fill'd with thronging groups, that, as
You pass, grow silent, and look sullen round on you,
Then fall again to converse.

Appius. 'Tis ill tim'd.

Marcus. What say you, Appius?

Appius. Murder's ill tim'd, I say,
Happen when 'twill; but now is most ill tim'd,
When Rome is in a ferment, on account
Of Claudius, and this girl he calls his slave;
" For come when evil will, or how it will,
All's laid to our account!" Look out and see
If Claudius be approaching yet. [*Exit Marcus.*
" My wish,
Like an officious friend, comes out of time
To tell me of success. I had rather far
It had miscarried—they run high enough;
They wanted not this squall on squall to raise them
Above their present swell—the waves run high
Enough, through which we steer;—but such a haven,
If won, can never be too dearly won!"

Marcus (*entering.*) Claudius is here!

Enter CLAUDIUS.

Appius. Well, Claudius, are the forces
At hand?

Claudius. They are, and timely too; the people
Are in unwonted ferment.

Appius. I have heard
Word has arriv'd of old Dentatus' death;
Which, as I hear, and wonder not to hear it,
The mutinous citizens lay to our account.

Claudius. That's bad enough; yet—

Appius. Ha! what's worse?

Claudius. 'Tis best
At once to speak what you must learn at last,
Yet last of all would learn.

Appius. Virginius!

Claudius. Yes!
He has arriv'd in Rome.
Marcus. They are coming, Appius.
Claudius. Fly, Marcus, hurry down the forces!
(*Exit Marcus.*) Appius,
Be not o'erwhelm'd!
Appius. There's something awes me at
The thought of looking on her father!
Claudius. Look
Upon her, my Appius! Fix your gaze upon
The treasures of her beauty, nor avert it
Till they are thine. Haste! Your tribunal!
Haste!

[*Appius ascends his tribunal. Enter* NUMITORIUS, ICILIUS, LUCIUS, CITIZENS, VIRGINIUS *leading his Daughter,* SERVIA, *and* CITIZENS. *A dead silence prevails.*

Virginius. Does no one speak? I am defendant here.
Is silence my opponent? Fit opponent
To plead a cause too foul for speech! What brow
Shameless gives front to this most valiant cause,
That tries its prowess 'gainst the honour of
A girl, yet lacks the wit to know, that the
Who cast off shame should likewise cast off fear—
" And on the verge o' the combat wants the nerve
To stammer forth the signal?"
Appius. You had better,
Virginius, wear another kind of carriage:
This is not of the fashion that will serve you.
Virginius. The fashion, Appius! Appius Claudius, tell me
The fashion it becomes a man to speak in,
Whose property in his own child—the offspring
Of his own body, near to him as is
His hand, his arm—yea, nearer—closer far,
Knit to his heart—I say, who has his property
In such a thing, the very self of himself,

Disputed—and I'll speak so, Appius Claudius;
I'll speak so—Pray you tutor me!
Appius. Stand forth,
Claudius! If you lay claim to any interest
In the question now before us, speak; if not,
Bring on some other cause.
Claudius. Most noble Appius—
Virginius. And are you the man
That claims my daughter for his slave?—Look at me,
And I will give her to thee.
Claudius. She is mine, then:
Do I not look at you?
Virginius. Your eye does, truly,
But not your soul.—I see it through your eye
Shifting and shrinking—turning every way
To shun me. "You surprise me, that your eye,
So long the bully of its master, knows not
To put a proper face upon a lie,
But gives the port of impudence to falsehood,
When it would pass it off for truth." Your soul
Dares as soon show its face to me.—Go on,
I had forgot; the fashion of my speech
May not please Appius Claudius.
Claudius. I demand
Protection of the Decemvir!
Appius. You shall have it.
Virginius. Doubtless!
Appius. Keep back the people, Lictors! What's
Your plea? You say the girl's your slave—Produce
Your proofs.
Claudius. My proof is here, which, if they can,
Let them confront. The mother of the girl—
[*Virginius, stepping forward to speak, is withheld by Numitorius.*
Numitorius. Hold, brother! Hear them out, or suffer me
to speak.
Virginius. Man, I must speak, or else go mad!

And if I do go mad, what then will hold me
From speaking? "Wer't not better, brother, think you,
To speak and not go mad, than to go mad
And then to speak?" She was thy sister, too!
Well, well, speak thou.—I'll try, and if I can
Be silent. (*Retires.*)

Numitorius. Will she swear she is her child?

Virginius. (*Starting forward.*) To be sure she will—a most wise question that!
Is she not his slave! Will his tongue lie for him—
Or his hand steal—or the finger of his hand
Beckon, or point, or shut, or open for him?
To ask him if she'll swear!—Will she walk or run,
Sing, dance, or wag her head; do any thing
That is most easy done? She'll as soon swear!
What mockery it is to have one's life
In jeopardy by such a bare-fac'd trick!
Is it to be endur'd? I do protest
Against her oath!

Appius. No law in Rome, Virginius,
Seconds you. If she swear the girl's her child,
The evidence is good, unless confronted
By better evidence. Look you to that,
Virginius. I shall take the woman's oath.

Virginia. Icilius!

Icilius. Fear not, love; a thousand oaths
Will answer her.

Appius. You swear the girl's your child,
And that you sold her to Virginius' wife,
Who pass'd her for her own. Is that your oath?

Slave. It is my oath.

Appius. Your answer now, Virginius.

Virginius. Here it is!
[*Brings Virginia forward.*
Is this the daughter of a slave? I know
'Tis not with men, as shrubs and trees, that by
The shoot you know the rank and order of
The stem. Yet who from such a stem would look

For such a shoot. My witnesses are these —
The relatives and friends of Numitoria,
Who saw her, ere Virginia's birth, sustain
The burden which a mother bears, nor feels
The weight, with longing for the sight of it.
Here are the ears that listen'd to her sighs
In nature's hour of labour, which subsides
In the embrace of joy — the hands, that when
The day first look'd upon the infant's face,
And never look'd so pleas'd, help'd them up to it,
And bless'd her for a blessing — Here, the eyes
That saw her lying at the generous
And sympathetic fount, that at her cry
Sent forth a stream of liquid living pearl
To cherish her enamell'd veins. The lie
Is most unfruitful then, that takes the flower—
The very flower our bed connubial grew —
To prove its barrenness! Speak for me, friends;
Have I not spoke the truth.

Women and Citizens. You have, Virginius.

Appius. Silence! keep silence there.—No more of that!
You're very ready for a tumult, citizens.

[*Troops appear behind.*

Lictors, make way to let these troops advance!
We have had a taste of your forbearance, masters,
And wish not for another.

Virginius. Troops in the Forum!

Appius. Virginius, have you spoken?

Virginius. If you have heard me,
I have; if not, I'll speak again.

Appius. You need not,
Virginius; I have evidence to give,
Which, should you speak a hundred times again,
Would make your pleading vain.

Virginius. Your hand, Virginia!
Stand close to me. (*Aside.*)

Appius. My conscience will not let me
Be silent. 'Tis notorious to you all.

That Claudius' father, at his death, declar'd me
The guardian of his son—This cheat has long
Been known to me. I know the girl is not
Virginius' daughter.

Virginius. Join your friends, Icilius,
And leave Virginia to my care. (*Aside.*)

Appius. "The justice
I should have done my client, unrequir'd,
Now cited by him, how shall I refuse?"

Virginius. Don't tremble, girl! don't tremble. (*Aside.*)

Appius. Virginius,
I feel for you; but, though you were my father,
The majesty of justice should be sacred—
Claudius must take Virginia home with him!

Virginius. And if he must, I should advise him, Appius,
To take her home in time, before his guardian
Complete the violation, which his eyes
Already have begun—Friends! Fellow Citizens!
Look not on Claudius—Look on your Decemvir!
He is the master claims Virginia!
The tongues that told him she was not my child
Are these—the costly charms he cannot purchase,
Except by making her the slave of Claudius,
His client, his purveyor, that caters for
His pleasures—markets for him—picks, and scents,
And tastes, that he may banquet—serves him up
His sensual feast, and is not now asham'd,
In the open, common street, before your eyes—
Frighting your daughters and your matrons' cheeks
With blushes they ne'er thought to meet—to help him
To the honour of a Roman maid! my child!
Who now clings to me, as you see, as if
This second Tarquin had already coil'd
His arms around her. Look upon her, Romans!
Befriend her! succour her! see her not polluted
Before her father's eyes!—He is but one

Tear her from Appius and his Lictors, while
She is unstain'd—Your hands! your hands! your hands!

Citizens. They are yours, Virginius.

Appius. Keep the people back—
Support my Lictors, soldiers! Seize the girl,
And drive the people back.

Icilius. Down with the slaves!

[*The people make a show of resistance, but, upon the advancing of the soldiers, retreat, and leave Icilius, Virginius, and his Daughter, &c., in the hands of Appius and his party.*

Deserted!—Cowards! Traitors! "Let me free
But for a moment! I relied on you;
Had I relied upon myself alone
I had kept them still at bay! I kneel to you—
Let me but loose a moment, if 'tis only
To rush upon your swords!"

Virginius. Icilius, peace!
You see how 'tis, we are deserted, left
Alone by our friends, surrounded by our enemies,
Nerveless and helpless*.

Appius. Separate them, Lictors!

Virginius. Let them forbear awhile, I pray you, Appius:
It is not very easy. Though her arms
Are tender, yet the hold is strong, by which
She grasps me, Appius—Forcing them will hurt them,
They'll soon unclasp themselves. Wait but a little—
You know you're sure of her!

Appius. I have not time
To idle with thee, give her to my Lictors.

Virginius. Appius, I pray you wait! If she is not
My child, she hath been like a child to me
For fifteen years. If I am not her father
I have been like a father to her, Appius,

* *Appius.* Away with him!
Icilius. Virginia! Tyrant! My Virginia!
Appius. Away with him, &c. [*Icilius is borne off.*

For even such a time. "They that have liv'd
So long a time together, in so near
And dear society, may be allow'd
A little time for parting." Let me take
The maid aside, I pray you, and confer
A moment with her nurse; perhaps she'll give me
Some token, will unloose a tie, so twin'd
And knotted round my heart, that if you break it
My heart breaks with it.

Appius. Have your wish. Be brief!
Lictors! look to them.

Virginia. Do you go from me!
Do you leave! Father! Father!

Virginius. No, my child;
No, my Virginia—come along with me.

Virginia. Will you not leave me? Will you take me with you?
Will you take me home again? O, bless you, bless you!
My father! my dear father! Art thou not
My father!

[*Virginius, perfectly at a loss what to do, looks anxiously around the Forum; at length his eye falls on a butcher's stall, with a knife upon it.*

Virginius. This way, my child—No, no! I am not going
To leave thee, my Virginia! I'll not leave thee.

Appius. "Keep back the people, soldiers! Let them not
Approach Virginius! Keep the people back!"

[*Virginius secures the knife.*

Well, have you done?

Virginius. Short time for converse, Appius;
But I have.

Appius. I hope you are satisfied.

Virginius. I am—
I am—that she is my daughter!

Appius. Take her, Lictors!

[*Virginia shrieks, and falls half dead upon her father's shoulder.*

Virginius. Another moment, pray you. Bear
with me
A little—'Tis my last embrace. 'Twont try
Your patience beyond bearing, if you're a man!
Lengthen it as I may I cannot make it
Long! My dear child! My dear Virginia!
[*kissing her.*
There is one only way to save thine honour—
'Tis this!—
[*Stabs her, and draws out the knife. Icilius breaks from the soldiers that held him, and catches her.*
Lo! Appius! with this innocent blood,
I do devote thee to th' infernal gods!
Make way there!
Appius. Stop him! Seize him!
Virginius. If they dare
To tempt the desperate weapon that is madden'd
With drinking my daughter's blood, why let them:
Thus
It rushes in amongst them. Way there! Way!
[*Exit through the soldiers.*

" *Enter* HONORIUS *and* VALERIUS.

Honorius. What tumult's this?———
The fair Virginia
Kill'd by her father's hand, to save her from
The lust of Appius Claudius? Most foul cause,
That makes so dark a deed look fair!
Appius. Remove
The body, Lictors.
Icilius. At the peril of
Their lives! Death is abroad, at work, and most
In earnest when with such a feat as this
He opens his exploits!
Appius. Obey me, slaves!
Honorius. Defend the body, freemen. There's
a spark
Remaining still, which, though not strong enough
To light it up with its own beauteous life,

May yet rekindle liberty, and save
Expiring Rome!
Citizens. It shall not be removed!
Appius. Seize it, I say!
Valerius. Back, slaves! Give place to freemen!
[*A tumult ensues; the people deprive the Lictors of their fasces, and drive them, with the soldiers, with Appius Claudius, &c., off the stage, then return shouting.*
Icilius. Ay, shout, and shout: a far more glorious cause
Call'd for your voices, and you had not then
The breath to whisper. How that ear had thank'd you,
Had you as tender been of the jewel of
Its precious sense as of the empty casket!
Honorius. A litter, Citizens, to lift the body,
And bear it through the streets; the spectacle
Will fill all eyes with tears, all hearts with fire!
Icilius. No hand but mine shall touch it: I will be
Its living bier.
Honorius. Icilius, listen to me!
Thou art not now thyself, and knowest not
There is a sweeter strain than that of grief—
Revenge, that drowns it. Suffer us to bear
Thy bride along the streets; a second, but
Unstain'd Lucretia, buying with her blood
The life of Rome and freedom!
Icilius. Rome and freedom!
There is your ransom! such a costly one—
O, you are dear, to be so dearly won! [*Exeunt.*"

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

ACT V.

SCENE FIRST.

A STREET.

Enter APPIUS *and* MARCUS.

Appius. I do abjure all further league with them :
They have most basely yielded up their pow'r,
" And compromis'd their glory. Had they died
In their high seats, they had liv'd demi-gods ;
But now they live to die like basest men !"
Power gone, life follows ! Well ! tis well we know
The worst ! The worst ?—The worst is yet to come;
And if I err not, hither speeds a messenger
Whose heel it treads upon.

Enter VIBULANUS, *hastily, and other Decemvirs, with* MARCUS.

Vibulanus. Honorius and Valerius are elected
To the Consulate.—Virginius is made Tribune.
Appius. " No doubt they'd fill their offices, when ours
Were laid so poorly down.—You have acted wisely !

Vibulanus. Who could resist Virginius, raving at
The head of the revolted troops, with all
The commons up in arms? Waste not dear time!
Look to your safety, Appius. 'Tis resolv'd
To cite you instantly before the Consuls.
Appius. Look to my safety, say you? You would bid
A man, that's tumbling from a precipice
A hundred fathoms high, and midway down,
Look to his safety! What has he to snatch at?
Air!—E'en so much have I.
Vibulanus. Withdraw awhile
From Rome. We shall recal you with applause
And honours.
Appius. Yes! You saw me on the brink—
Beheld it giving way beneath my feet—
And saw me tottering o'er the hideous leap,
Whose sight sent round the brain with madd'ning whirl,
With but a twig to stay me, which you cut,
Because it was your friend that hung by it—
Most kindly.
Vibulanus. Nay," employ the present time
In looking to your safety—" that secur'd,
Reproach us as you will."
Appius. I am in your hands,
Lead me which way you please.
Icilius (without). Hold! Stand.

ICILIUS *enters, with* HONORIUS *and* VALERIUS *as Consuls,* NUMITORIUS *and* LICTORS.

Did I not tell you 'twas the tyrant? Look,
Was I not right? I felt that he was present
Ere mine eye told it me.—You are our prisoner.
Appius. On what pretence, Icilius?

Icilius. Ask of poor
Virginius, tottering between despair
And madness, as he seeks the home, where once
He found a daughter!
Appius. I demand due time
To make up my defence.
Icilius. Demand due time!
Appius!—Assign the cause, why you denied
A Roman maid, of free condition,
Her liberty provisionally, while
Her plea remain'd unjudg'd. No answer, Appius?
Lictors, lay hold upon him—to prison with him!
Look to him well. To prison with the tyrant!

[*Exeunt Appius and Lictors on one side, Icilius and Numitorius on the other.*

Vibulanus. Let all his friends, that their own safety prize,
Solicit straight for his enlargement; doff
Their marks of station, and to the vulgar eye
Disguise it with the garb of mourning: 'twill
Conciliate the crowd.—We know them well:
But humour them, they are water soon as fire!

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE SECOND.

VIRGINIUS'S HOUSE.

Enter LUCIUS *and* SERVIA.

Lucius. Is he not yet come home?
Servia. Not since her death.
I dread his coming home, good Lucius.
Lucius. A step! 'Tis Numitorius and Virginius.
Servia. Gods! how he looks!—See, Lucius, how he looks!

Enter VIRGINIUS, *attended by* NUMITORIUS *and others.*

Virginius. 'Tis ease! 'tis ease! I am content!
'Tis peace,
'Tis any thing that is most soft and quiet.
And after such a dream!—I want my daughter;
Send me my daughter!
Numitorius. Yes, his reason's gone.
Scarce had he come in sight of his once sweet
And happy home, ere with a cry he fell
As one struck dead.—When to himself he came,
We found him as you see. How is it, brother?
Virginius. How should it be but well? Our cause is good.
Think you Rome will stand by, and see a man
Robb'd of his child? We are bad enough, but yet
They should not so mistake us. "We are slaves,
But not yet monsters."—Call my daughter to me.

What keeps her thus? I never stept within
The threshold yet, without her meeting me
With a kiss. She's very long a coming. Call
her!

Numitorius. Icilius comes! See, my Icilius, see!

Enter ICILIUS.

Virginius. Come, come, make ready. Brother,
you and he
Go on before: I'll bring her after you.

Icilius. Ha!

Numitorius. My Icilius, what a sight is there!
Virginius' reason is a wreck, so stripp'd
And broken up by wave and wind, you scarce
Would know it was the gallant bark you saw
Riding so late in safety!

Icilius (taking Virginius's hand). Father! Father!
That art no more a father!

Virginius. Ha! what wet
Is this upon my hand? A tear, boy! Fie,
For shame! Is that the weapon you would guard
Your bride with? First essay what steel can do!

Numitorius. Not a tear has bless'd his eye since
her death! "No wonder.
The fever of his brain, that now burns out,
Has drunk the source of sorrow's torrents dry.

Icilius. You would not have it otherwise?
'Twas fit
The bolt, that struck the sole remaining branch,
And blasted it, should set the trunk on fire!"

Numitorius. If we could make him weep—

Icilius. I have that will make him,
If aught will do it. 'Tis her urn. 'Twas that
Which first drew tears from me. I'll fetch it. But
I cannot think you wise, to wake a man
Who's at the mercy of a tempest. Better
You suffer him to sleep it through. [*Exit Icilius.*

Virginius. Gather your friends together: tell them of
Dentatus' murder. Screw the chord of rage
To the topmost pitch. Mine own is not mine own! *(laughs)*
That's strange enough. Why does he not dispute
My right to my own flesh, and tell my heart
Its blood is not its own? He might as well. *(laughs)*
But I want my child.

Enter Lucius.

Lucius. Justice will be defeated!
Virginius. Who says that?
He lies in the face of the gods! She is immutable,
Immaculate, and immortal! And though all
The guilty globe should blaze, she will spring up
Through the fire, and soar above the crackling pile,
With not a downy feather ruffled by
Its fierceness!
Numitorius. He is not himself! What new
Oppression comes to tell us to our teeth,
We only mock'd ourselves to think the days
Of thraldom past?
Lucius. The friends of Appius
Beset the people with solicitations.
The fickle crowd, that change with every change,
Begin to doubt and soften. Every moment
That's lost a friend is lost. Appear among
Your friends, or lose them!
Numitorius. Lucius, you
Remain, and watch Virginius.
[*Exit, followed by all but Lucius and Servia.*
Virginius. You remember,
Don't you, nurse?
Servia. What, Virginius?
Virginius. That she nurs'd
The child herself. "Inquire among your gossips,

Which of them saw it; and, with such of them
As can avouch the fact, without delay
Repair to the forum." Will she come or not?
I'll call myself! — She will not dare! —O when
Did my Virginia dare—Virginia!
Is it a voice, or nothing answers me?
I hear a sound so fine—there's nothing lives
'Twixt it and silence. "Such a slender one
I've heard when I have talk'd with her in fancy!
A phantom sound!" Aha! She is not here!
They told me she was here: they have deceiv'd
me;
And Appius was not made to give her up,
But keeps her, and effects his wicked purpose,
While I stand talking here, and ask you if
My daughter is my daughter! Though a legion
Sentried that brothel, which he calls his palace,
I'd tear her from him!

Lucius. Hold, Virginius! Stay!
Appius is now in prison.

Virginius. With my daughter!
He has secur'd her there! Ha! has he so?
Gay office for a dungeon! Hold me not,
Or I will dash you down, and spoil you for
My keeper. My Virginia, struggle with him!
Appal him with thy shrieks; ne'er faint, ne'er
faint!
I am coming to thee! I am coming to thee!

[*Virginius rushes out, followed by Lucius, Servia, and others.*

SCENE FOURTH.

A DUNGEON.

APPIUS *discovered.*

Appius. From the palace to the dungeon is a road
Trod oft, not oft retrod. What hope have I
To pace it back again? I know of none.
I am as one that's dead! "The dungeon, that
Encloses fallen greatness, may as well
Be call'd its tomb." I am as much the carcass
Of myself, as if the string were taken from
My neck. Their hands long for the office. O,
'Tis worth the half of a Plebeian's life
To get his greasy fingers on the throat
Of a Patrician! But I'll balk them. Come!
Appius shall have an executioner
No less illustrious than himself.

[*He is on the point of swallowing poison, when Vibulanus enters.*

Who's there?
Vibulanus Your friend!
Appius. My Vibulanus!
Vibulanus. Appius, what
Was that you hid in such confusion as
I enter'd?
Appius. 'Tis a draught for life, which, swallow'd,
She relishes so richly, that she cares not
If she ne'er drink again! Here's health to you!
Vibulanus. Not out of such a cup as that, my Appius.
"Despair, that bids you drink it, as the cure
Of canker'd life, but lies to you, and turns

Your eyes from hope, that even now stands ready
With outstretch'd arms to rush to your embrace."
Your friends are busy for you with your foes—
Your foes become your friends. Where'er a frown
Appears against you, nothing's spar'd to make
The wearer doff it, and put up a smile
In its stead. "Your colleague Oppius is in prison.
Your client too. Their harm's your safety: it
Distracts the appetite o' the dogs. They drop
The morsel they took up before, as soon
As a new one's thrown to them."

Appius. Thou giv'st me life
Indeed!

Vibulanus. That I may give thee life indeed,
I'll waste no longer time with thee; "for that
Already taken to assure thee of
Thy fast reviving fortunes, cheats them of
The aid should help to re-establish them."
Farewell, my Appius! If my absence takes
A friend from thee, it leaves one with thee—Hope!
[*Exit.*

Appius. And I will clasp it to me! Never friend
Made sweeter promises. But snatch me from
Beneath the feet of the vile herd, that's now
Broke loose and roams at large, I'll show them who
They'd trample on. "Hope! Hope! They say of thee,
Thou art a friend that promises, but cares not
To keep his word. This once keep thine with Appius,
And he will give thee out so true a tongue,
Thy word is bond enough!"—At liberty!
Again at liberty! O give me power
As well, for every minute of my thraldom
I'll pick a victim from the common herd
Shall groan his life in bondage. "Liberty!

'Tis triumph, power, dominion, every thing!"
Are ye not open yet, ye servile gates?
Let fall your chains, and push your bolts aside!
It is your past and future lord commands you!
Virginius (rushing in.) Give me my daughter!
Appius. Ha!
Virginius. My child! my daughter!
My daughter! my Virginia! Give her me!
Appius. Thy daughter!
Virginius. Ay! Deny that she is mine
And I will strangle thee, unless the lie
Should choke thee first.
Appius. Thy daughter!
Virginius. Play not with me!
Provoke me not! Equivocate, and lo!
Thou sport'st with fire. I am wild, distracted, mad!
I am all a flame—a flame! I tell thee once
For all, I want my child, and I will have her;
So give her to me.
Appius. Cag'd with a madman! Hoa!
Without there!
Virginius. Not a step thou stirr'st from hence,
Till I have found my child. "Attempt that noise
Again, and I will stop the vent, that not
A squeak shall pass it. There are plugs for you
Will keep it air-tight (*showing his fingers*)." Please you, give me back
My daughter.
Appius. In truth she is not here, Virginius;
Or I would give her to thee.
Virginius. Would? Ay, should!
Tho' would were would not. Do you say, indeed
She is not here? You nothing know of her?
Appius. Nothing, Virginius! good Virginius, nothing.
Virginius. How if I thrust my hand into your breast,

And tore your heart out, and confronted it
With your tongue? I'd like it. Shall we try it?
Fool!
Are not the ruffians leagued? The one would swear
To the tale o' the other.
Appius. By the gods, Virginius,
Your daughter is not in my keeping.
Virginius. Well,
Then I must seek her elsewhere. I did dream
That I had murder'd her—'Tis false! 'twas but
A dream—She isn't here, you say—Well! well!
Then I must go and seek her elsewhere—Yet
She's not at home—and where else should I seek
her
But there or here? Here! here! here! Yes, I
say,
But there or here—I tell you I must find her—
She must be here, or what do you here? What,
But such a wonder of rich beauty could
Deck out a dungeon so as to despoil
A palace of its tenant? Art thou not
The tyrant Appius?—Did'st thou not decree
My daughter to be Claudius' slave, who gave
her
To his master? Have you not secur'd her here
To compass her dishonour, ere her father
Arrives to claim her?
Appius. No.
Virginius. Do you tell me so?
Vile tyrant! Think you, shall I not believe
My own eyes before your tongue? Why, there
she is!
There at your back—her locks dishevell'd and
Her vestment torn! Her cheeks all faded with
Her pouring tears, "as flowers with too much
rain!"
Her form no longer kept and treasur'd up
"By her maiden-pride, like a rich casket, cast

Aside, neglected and forgot, because
The richer gem was shrin'd in it is lost!"
Villain! is this a sight to show a father?
And have I not a weapon to requite thee?
[*Searches about his clothes.*
Ha! here are ten!
Appius. Keep down your hands! Help! help!
Virginius. No other look but that! Look on! look on!
It turns my very flesh to steel—Brave girl!
Keep thine eye fix'd—let it not wink—Look on!
[*Exeunt, struggling.*

Enter NUMITORIUS, ICILIUS, LUCIUS, *Guard, and Soldier bearing Virginia's Urn.*

Numitorius. Not here!
Lucius. Is this the dungeon?—Appius is not here,
Nor yet Virginius. You have sure mistaken.
Guard. This is the dungeon—Here Virginius entered.
Numitorius. Yet is not here!—Hush! The abode of death
Is just as silent. Gods! should the tyrant take
The father's life, in satisfaction for
The deed that robb'd him of the daughter's charms—
Hush! hark! A groan! There's something stirs.
Lucius. 'Tis this way!
Numitorius. Come on! Protect him, gods, or pardon me
If with my own hand I revenge his death.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE FIFTH.

ANOTHER DUNGEON.

VIRGINIUS *discovered on one knee, with* APPIUS *lying dead before him. Enter* NUMITORIUS, ICILIUS, LUCIUS, *Citizens, and others.*

Numitorius. What's here? Virginius! with the tyrant prostrate and dead!

Lucius. His senses are benumb'd; there is no adit to his mind, by which our words can reach it. Help to raise him: the motion may recal perception.

Numitorius. His eye is not so deathlike fix'd: it moves a little.

Lucius. Speak to him, Numitorius; he knows your voice the best.

Numitorius. Virginius!

Lucius. I think he hears you; speak again.

Numitorius. Virginius!

Virginius. Ah!

Lucius. That sigh has burst the spell which held him.

Numitorius. Virginius! my dear brother!

Virginius. Lighter! lighter! My heart is ten times lighter! What a load it has heav'd off! Where is he? I thought I had done it.

Numitorius. Virginius!

Virginius. Well, who are you? What do you want? I'll answer what I've done.

Numitorius. Do you not know me, brother? Speak, Icilius, try if he knows you.

Icilius. Virginius!

Numitorius. Try again.

Icilius. Virginius!

Virginius. That voice—that voice—I know that voice!

It minds me of a voice was coupled with it,
And made such music, once to hear it was
Enough to make it, ever after be
Remembered! (*Icilius places the urn in his hand.*)
What's this?

Icilius. Virginia!

[*Virginius looks alternately at Icilius and the Urn — looks at Numitorius and Lucius — seems particularly struck by his mourning — looks at the Urn again — bursts into a passion of tears, and exclaims,* "VIRGINIA!" — *Falls on Icilius's neck. Curtain drops.*

END OF THE FIFTH ACT.

EPILOGUE,

BY

BARRY CORNWALL, Esq.

Spoken by Miss Brunton.

LEAVING the common path, which many tread,
We will not wake with jokes our poets dead:
Nor shame the young creations of his pen,
By bidding all, who've perish'd, be again.
The pale Virginia, in her bloody shroud,
Lies like a shrined saint.—Oh! then, aloud
Shall we break scurril jests, and bid depart
Those thoughts of her, which fill and teach the heart?
No moral now we offer, squar'd in form,
But Pity, like the sun-light, bright and warm,
Comes mix'd with showers; and, fading, leaves behind
A beauty and a blossom on the mind.
We do not strain to show that "thus it grows."
And "hence we learn" what every body knows:
But casting idle dogmas (words) aside,
We paint a villain in his purple pride;
And tearing down a pow'r, that grew too bold,
Show—merely what was done in days of old.
Leaving this image on the soul, we go
Unto our gentler story, touch'd with woe;
(With woe that wantons not, nor wears away
The heart) and love too perfect for decay.
But whatsoe'er we do, we will not shame
Your better feeling, with an idle game
Of grin and mimicry (a loathsome task);
Or strip the great Muse of her mighty mask,
And hoot her from her throne of tears and sighs,
Until, from folly and base jest, she dies.
No; let her life be long, her reign supreme—
If but a dream, it is a glorious dream.
Dwell then upon our tale; and bear along
With you, deep thoughts—of love—of bitter wrong—
Of freedom—of sad pity—and lust of pow'r.
The tale is fitted for an after hour.

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A

Roland for an Oliver:

A FARCE,

In Two Acts,

FIRST PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, COVENT GARDEN,

ON THURSDAY, APRIL 29, 1819.

By THOMAS MORTON, Esq.

AUTHOR OF SPEED THE PLOUGH, CURE FOR THE HEART ACHE, SCHOOL OF REFORM, &c. &c.

London:

PRINTED FOR JOHN MILLER, BURLINGTON ARCADE, PICCADILLY.

(Price Two Shillings)

1819.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Sir Mark Chase	Mr. Fawcett.
Mr. Selborne	Mr. Abbott.
Alfred Highflyer	Mr. Jones.
Fixture	Mr. Emery.
Gamekeeper	Mr. Isaacs.
Mrs. Selborne	Miss Beaumont.
Maria Darlington	Miss Foote.
Mrs. Fixture	Miss Green.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Author of this Farce, who is now residing in France, consigned it to my care, in my double capacity of Stage Manager and Old Friend, to do what I thought best by it. The Stage is so much indebted to him for many excellent Dramas, and I am so much bound to him by ties of sincere regard, that I have been exceedingly anxious for it's success. Those who have witnessed its representation, must know how highly I have been gratified; for, perhaps, no Farce ever excited more genuine laughter, and tumultuous applause, than this has done. I now publish it without the advantage of my Friend's revision; but as I act in this, as in all other instances relative to him, with my best judgment, I trust he will approve what I have done,

And believe me his

Sincere Friend,

JOHN FAWCETT.

THEATRE ROYAL COVENT GARDEN,
May 8, 1819.

A

Roland for an Oliver.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

A hall belonging to Sir Mark Chase—*a chamber door in the back scene, another in the side scene; An entrance far back, through which is seen a wall, and a house beyond for lunatics.*

Enter Mr. *and* Mrs. Selborne, *with a Post-boy.*

Mr. Sel. The *horses are* paid for; there's for yourselves—*(giving money).*

Post-boy. (dissatisfied) Your honour, we *gallopped* all the way.

Mr. Sel. True; and had you *trotted,* I would have given you *double*—Go!

[*Exit* Post-boy.

As I expected—nobody to receive us. The old, faithful domestics are, no doubt, gathered round my poor uncle's death-bed. If the fatal moment has not *passed,* I must find some one to announce me. *(Rings the bell).* Nobody to answer.

Mrs. Sel. I hear a carriage stop.

Mr. Sel. (sighing) The mourning equipage, may be!

Mrs. Sel. (looking out at the hall door). No; happily it is the carriage of our kind friend, Maria Darlington—true to her appointment!

(Selborne *runs out, and returns with* Maria).

Mrs. Sel. A thousand grateful thanks!

Maria. My time to a second! Me voici! *(shewing her watch to* Mrs. Selborne*).* My dear Frances! *(salutes her).* How provokingly handsome you look: Nay, don't blush, or there'll be no bearing you! But now, my sweet friends, having accomplished my journey, I hope you'll not think me very unreasonable, if I ask—*why* I have made it?

Mrs. Sel. Indeed, Maria, it will require all your good nature to pardon the liberty my husband——

Maria. Pardon, nonsense!—Come, Mr. Œdipus, solve your riddle.

Mr. Sel. Thus then—my worthy uncle here is dead, or dying.

Maria. Poor Sir Mark, I'm very sorry; I flatter myself I was a great favourite of his.

Mr. Sel. He wrote me this letter, which, *(producing a letter).* Oh! here's Old Fixture, his favourite Yorkshire servant.

(Fixture *sings without, "Old King Cole,"* &c.

What, *singing! unfeeling scoundrel!* That fellow has fattened on my uncle's bounty these thirty years; and to sing at such a moment is unfeeling indeed.

Enter Fixture, *singing.*

Fix. (*seeing* Selborne). Ah! my young Master, I be mortal glad to see you---you look deadly well.

Mr. Sel. Mortal, and *deadly! apt* words I *own,* and *fitted* to the scene. *Well, Fixture,* my poor uncle—what! he's gone?

Fix. Yes—I wish he had *not;* he'll find it very cold.

Mr. Sel. Cold! (apart). True, the grave is cold!

Fix. But he said he should be soon in a fine *glow.*

Mr. Sel. Soon be in a fine glow!

Fix. I suppose you can *guess where* he is gone?

Mr. Sel. Where we *all* hope to go.

Fix. Yes---he's gone a shooting!

Mr. Sel. Shooting! why, he wrote me word he was dying.

Fix. Dying! he! he! Why Lord, Sir, he has been dying any day these thirty years,---he! he!

Mr. Sel. Indeed! he! he! I'm rejoiced (*walks*).

Fix. Yes, I see. (*two guns are fired.*) Bang! bang! That's he!----a brace---down, for a guinea!

Mr. Sel. Why, look here---(*showing a letter*). He sent for me *to close his eyes in death! (emphasizing each word.)*

Fix. I don't know about closing his *eyes* in *death;* but I know he seldom closes *one* without it. (*aiming*).

Mr. Sel. 'Tis absolute insanity! (*striking the letter with his hand*). *I say*---the next house to this, surrounded by a high wall---(the fellow's drove us there by mistake) 'tis an establishment for folks deranged here---(*hitting his forehead*). Is not it?

Fix. Oh, yes!

Mr. Sel. Depend on't, 'tis catching; my uncle's got a touch—I'll be damn'd but its catching!—*(walks about, gesticulating).*

Fix. (looking at him suspiciously). Why, I don't know but it is—

(A dog-whistle is blown in a long continued note).

That's Master—that's for me! what a shortness of breath he has got! he! he! dying, quotha! he! he!—Coming, sir.

Mrs. Fixture. (without) Why, Fixture! husband! husband, I say.

Fix. That's my *wife's* whistle; how shrill and tuneful! *Master* must wait, when *Mistress* wants me.—Coming, dearee. [*Exit.*

Mr. Sel. Here's a pretty affair! But, don't do me the injustice to suppose I'm sorry to hear of my uncle's health. By my soul, I wish the worthy old fellow every blessing! But I've got into such a scrape—such a dilemma—so, so, so, so—*(walks about).*

Maria. Don't stammer, and strut about so—but explain.

Mr. Sel. I'll endeavour. You know, Maria, my uncle always wished that you and I should be united, and you know, I———

Maria. Did *not* wish it.

Mr. Sel. Oh, fie! you shock me—no—no I was conscious—I—I—did not merit so much—ha—ha—happiness—yes, so much happiness; and my dear Frances not thinking me unworthy her affection, we were——

Maria. Privately married—ye cruel wretches!—ha! ha! ha!

Mr. Sel. Don't laugh—'tis really no laughing matter——

Maria. Being married, you know best.

Mr. Sel. Three days ago I received this letter from my uncle; now only read it.

Maria. (*reads.*) "Dear Nephew, I find I am approaching my last moments"—

Mr. Sel. Last moments!—That's the gentleman that's shooting—pray go on!—

Maria. "I shall leave you my whole fortune, pro-"vided you present to me Maria Darlington as your "bride." Meaning me! my best curtsey is due for that—(*curtseys*). "Rely on it, George, look England "thro', you'll not find so perfect"—(*tickled with the supposed compliment*)—Oh! dear!—"so beautiful"—Oh! I really can't go on. (*Giving the letter to Selborne.*)

Mr. Sel. "Not find so perfect, so beautiful a manor "for Partridges, as she is heiress to"—

Maria. (*with playful spite.*) *Partridge!* an old wretch—I'll plague his heart out for this.

Mr. Sel. (*reading.*) "If you don't marry her, your "legacy, namely, 'a nice *new shilling,*' now lies be-"fore me; the lawyer is in the house, and your an-"swer to this will be his instructions for the last "testament of your dying uncle, *Mark Chace.*— "P. S. If I am *dead* when you arrive, don't be *un-"comfortable*—you'll find well-aired linen—Venison "that has hung a fortnight—fresh *Trout*—the last new "Novel, and Hock quite alive—tho' a year older than "your departed uncle." Was there ever such an extraordinary letter? Need I say how *unhappy* it has made me?

Maria. And need I say how *hungry* it has made *me?* Well, and what was your answer?

Mr. Sel. Oh! I replied that I married you yesterday.

Maria. Married me! Partridges, and all!

Mr. Sel. And, that, according to his orders, we should be here to-day, and here we are!

Maria. Yes—and here we are! (*imitating*). Well, my dear Hubby, what's next? (*Taking his arm, and hugging it*).

Mr. Sel. I'm sure, Maria, you would have consented to our supposed marriage for a day or two; but, as my uncle is well, the situation will be intolerable!

Mrs. Sel. Oh, *quite intolerable!*

Maria. Ahem!

Mr. Sel. To *you*—of course I mean—intolerable to *you.*

Maria. Of course—ha! ha!—Well—and what's to be done?

Mr. Sel. Run away as fast as we can.

Maria. Run away! I'm glad I an't your wife.

Sir Mark, (*without*). My Nephew and his Bride arrived—Set the bells ringing—pile up the bonfires ---tap the October!

Maria. Besides, 'tis too late; you hear we have been announced.

Mrs. S. Let us fall at his feet, and implore pardon.

Maria. What, finish the farce in the first scene—that would, I think, be a pity! Let me consider our characters—you are my husband.

Mr. Sel. Yes. (*sighing*).

Maria. Civil, and natural—*I'm* the happy bride; and pray, Miss, who are *you?*

Mrs. Sel. Who am I?

Maria. Yes, who are you? Be so good as to give an account of yourself.

Mrs. Sel. Oh! I'm your bridemaid, madam.

Maria. Very well—now mind: *your* trait is to do all in your power to *please* the old gentleman—*I* to *torment* him. I'll make myself so disagreeable

Mr. Sel. That you'll find very difficult.

Maria. There you are *complimenting*—you forget I'm your *wife*—stick to your character, if you please

—*your* efforts and *mine (to* Mrs. S.*)* will soon make Sir Mark *wish you had* been his nephew's wife—when he *does so,* then fall at his feet and own it—Hush! he's here!

Enter Sir Mark.

Sir Mark. (Speaking as he enters.) Where are they?—my darlings---my children—my heirs---Oh! George, right welcome to the manor of Warrender! I hope I shall shew you some sport *(Laying his gun down.)*

Maria. We hope to return the compliment. *(aside.)*

Sir Mark. Let me kiss your bride!

(Selborne *forgetting himself, presents* Mrs. Selborne.)

Heyday! this——

Mr. Sel. (with quickness.) No, sir—this—this is Miss Tiverton, sir—the bridemaid, sir—My bride you are already acquainted with—this lady being a stranger, sir.

Sir Mark. (*saluting her.*) No longer so. Miss Tiverton, I know your father well. Joy! joy, my Maria! *(hugs her.)* Aye, now all my wishes are accomplished—and I have now only to pull off my shooting gaiters, and lie me down and die.

Mr. Sel. Your letter alarmed me exceedingly—But you are not——

Sir Mark. Quite dead—no, George, not quite.

Mr. Sel. And how is your health, sir?

Sir Mark. Bad, very bad—the least thing fatigues me.

Mrs. Sel. Pray be seated, sir.

Sir Mark. Thank you, my pretty love. (*chucking her under the chin.*) I seldom sit down but at meals.

Mr. Sel. How far may you have walked to-day?

Sir Mark. (*shaking his head, and speaking plaintively.*) About eighteen miles, not a yard more!

Maria. Indeed! and the *fatigue* has made you faint.

Sir Mark. No, I feel faint from *hunger,* my dear.

Mr. Sel. Your appetite, then, is pretty good?

Sir Mark. Yes; I eat well, and I drink well, and I sleep well—but that's all.

All. Poor man!

Sir Mark. But let's be merry while we may—Egad! we'll have a day on't. Let's dress for dinner; there, George—there's the room I've prepared for you and your wife—this, Miss Tiverton, shall be yours—get you in—get you in!

Maria. (*embarrassed.*) I wish to be with my friend.

Mrs. Sel. Yes, sir, she wishes to be with me.

Sir Mark. Nonsense! Eh, George, you know better than that—there, go along with you, and help your wife to dress—What are you shilly-shallying about?—Why don't you go?

Maria. We're going, sir,—yes, sir, we're going.

Sir Mark. Well, then, go, sir—for I've a thousand things to do.

(*He pushes* Selborne *and* Miss Darlington *into the room at the back,* Mrs. Selborne *exit into hers.*)

(*Faintly.*) Oh, dear! Oh, dear! How the least thing shakes my poor weak frame, my pulse is low, and I feel ready to faint---I must try to support exhausted nature as well as I can. (*In the voice of Stentor.*) Fixture! put the venison pasty on the side-table, and a tankard of ale—I can touch nothing else before dinner. (*Exit.*

(Selborne *leaves the room he entered on tip-toe, and goes to his wife's apartment, taps at the door, and listens.*)

Re-enter Sir Mark.

Sir Mark. I forgot my gun---Eh! what's George about? (*steps aside.*)

Sel. (*taps again.*) Fanny! Fanny!

Sir Mark. Oh! Oh! I suspect poaching here. (*apart.*)

Mrs. Sel. (*from the room.*) Who's there?

Sel. 'Tis I!

Enter Mrs. Selborne.

Mrs. Sel. My dear George!

Sel. My sweet Fanny---I may not have another opportunity of telling you, that I shall contrive to deceive the old boy, and in the evening come secretly to your apartment.

Mrs. Sel. (*fondly pouting.*) But I don't like your being with your *wife* there, I assure you.

Sel. My soul! can you doubt 'tis you alone I adore? Let this embrace——

Sir Mark. Ahem! (*advances.*)

Sel. My uncle! undone!

Sir Mark. Oh! you profligate! Oh! you---what only two days married? Oh! you Don Juan! I'll expose you to your injured wife. Maria!---Mrs. Selborne! (*calls at the door.*)

Enter Maria.

Maria. What's the matter?

Sir Mark. The matter is---I caught your bridegroom in your bridemaid's arms, planning an assignation---and sorry I am to shock you, my dear, with such heart-breaking intelligence.

Maria. Oh, fie, George! I'm ashamed of you---you naughty man—you naughty man! (*playfully slapping his hands, which he returns.*)

Sir Mark. (*imitating.*) " You naughty man!" The world's at an end!---Oh! this is my precious match.

Mrs. Sel. What an indelicate situation I am placed in. (*hides her face.*)

Sir Mark. Ah! Miss Tiverton, you have some modesty, and I hope, my dear child, my interference has been opportune enough to save you from the arts of a libertine---from the seductions of that " naughty man." (*imitating.*) Don't weep, he shan't annoy you again---we'll dine by *ourselves,* and hob and nob together. (*taking her arm.*)

Sel. Hob and nob! sir, I——

Sir Mark. Keep off, sir! (*to* Mrs. Sel.) and tomorrow morning, my love, I'll take you home to your friends.---Fixture!

Sel. (*in agony.*) Then I shall lose my wife. (*aside to* Maria.)

Maria Be quiet!

Enter Fixture.

Sir Mark. Run to the Talbot, and order post-horses to be here at day-light, and furbish up the old coach.

Fix. Sir, the turkey hen is hatching a brood of chicks in it.

Sir Mark. Out with her! [*Exit* Fixture. Come, we'll take a walk in the garden, and you shall never see him again---there now!

(Selborne *can hardly be restrained by* Maria.)

And to-night you shall sleep in a room where nobody can come to you, but old Deborah, the housekeeper---there now!

(*Exeunt* Sir Mark, *and* Mrs. Selborne, *he patting and kissing her hand.*)

Sel. Sleep where nobody can come to her but old Deborah---Curse old Deborah! and, to-morrow, he takes her to her offended family, and I shall see her no more. I'll go and own my marriage.

Maria. (*stopping him.*) And triumphantly march off with your new shilling! No, that will never do. Have not we all the day to counterplot? (*going to the window.*) Ha! ha! how lovingly they walk together! George, come here---Quick! quick! whose equipage is that passing the gates---there---see!

Sel. Oh! I know---'tis---'tis---pshaw! Oh! the Hon. Mr. Highflyer.

Maria. I thought so---then this is no place for *me*---I suppose he's coming here---therefore I go—

Sel. Coming here! no such thing! neither my uncle nor I are acquainted with him. His place is near Newmarket, far away from---

Maria. Newmarket---Yes, yes, I know. (*peevishly.*)

Sel. Have you had a little quarrel lately?

Maria. Lately! sir, I fortunately have not seen that gentleman for eleven months and seventeen days, for I have counted them. I own I was at first a little uneasy at our breaking off, but time has, as you see,

entirely removed both regret and resentment---Obstinate wretch!

Sel. Oh! I see it has.

Maria. I now make it a rule never to talk about him—never.—Could you believe this of him, Mr. Selborne?—I had perfected myself *à merveille* in a piece of music of his recommendation—had the concert fixed—sent him a card—instead of his presence, I was honoured with a letter from Newmarket—shocked —*en desespoir*, and a parcel of trash, that he could not be present—but that business must be minded—I returned his letter in a blank cover—he wrote another, I returned it—another, I returned that—and would you think it possible—he wrote no more.

Sel. Tho' you had only sent back three letters.

Maria. Only three!

Sel. And you have not sought a reconciliation?

Maria. Reconciliation, sir!—Rivers may climb mountains---doves become the nestlings of kites---man become faithful—any monstrous thing is more probable than that I should be reconciled to Alfred!

Sel. (Apart.) I wish I had an opportunity to try that---I see she loves him.

Enter Fixture, *with a card in one hand, and a guinea in the other.*

Fix. (looking at the guinea.) Very much of a gentleman indeed.—Sir, would you believe it---I've been at the public house, and——

Sel. I can very easily believe it.

Fix. There's a great stranger come---a mortal sensible man.

Sel. How do you know that?

Fix. He gave me a guinea---Says he---" I wish to examine the inside of the interior of that wise insane establishment"—next door, you know, sir; master's a governor, thinks I---so, I'll get a ticket for *him*--- and mayhap, another guinea for myself (*reading the card.*) The Hon. Alfred Highflyer---*(walking slowly out, and looking alternately at card and guinea.)*

Maria. (overlooking) " Of Racket Hall"—'tis my detestable lover---who is——

Fix. Very much of a gentleman indeed! [*Exit.*

Maria. I won't stay!

Sel. He's not coming here---so, why agitate yourself?

Maria. Agitate myself! ridiculous! To prove I'm not concerned about him, I shall go and amuse myself at the window. [*Exit.*

Sel. For the chance of seeing him---They shall meet, that's fixed---Eh! I have it---Fixture, come back---I want you---Come back, I say!

(Maria *appears at the door.*)

Maria. Come back! what can Selborne want with him---thank heaven, I've no curiosity---only one may as well listen.

Sel. Ha! ha! 'tis a bold thought, but I owe Maria a good turn, so here goes! [*Enter* Fixture.] Come hither! I'll tell you, my old boy, how you may make that *one* guinea *five.* (*Taking out his purse.*)

Fix. By coining---?

Sel. Only a little *falsehood,* my old friend.---You must assist my plans, and share my confidence.---Know, then, I am married to Miss Tiverton; but, fearing Sir Mark's disinheriting threats, have deceived him by a pretended alliance with his favourite, Miss Darlington.---*That Mr. Highflyer* is her lover (*pointing to the card.*) They have quarrelled, and I wish to bring about a meeting; therefore, instead of taking him to the next house, you shall introduce him to *this,* as the Lunatic Asylum, and to *me,* as the managing *director!*

Fix. This house as the lunatic---He! he! Oh, you're joking!

Sel. If you *think* so, I'll put my purse in my pocket.

Fix. No, don't---there would be no *joke* in that.

Sel. The governor's compliments to Mr. Highflyer ---shall be happy in receiving the honour of his visit---you hear?

Fix. Tolerably.

Sel. (*chinking the purse.*) You understand?

Fix. Perfectly!---I'm to say, this is a Lunacy House ---Ecod! it is not very unlike one.

Sel. Mind you repeat——

Fix. Never fear---I'll repeat all the lies you've told me, you may depend on't---Ha! ha!---The Governor's compliments [*Exit, repeating his lesson, behind.*

Maria. (*advances.*) Upon my word, a very pretty scheme! and I am, I suppose, to be out of my senses ---I must be so to join in it!

Enter Sir Mark, *and Mrs.* Selborne, *from behind.*

Sel. Nay, but Maria---now hear me---ought you to be angry---here am I taking pains to bring a lover to your feet, and you are not satisfied.

Sir Mark. How unreasonable!---Well said, husband!

Maria. You are very kind, sir---but I am vain enough to think I can provide lovers for myself.

Sir Mark. I dare say you can!---Well said, wife! (*advancing.*) What will this world come to?

Sel. What the devil shall I do now?

Maria. Do!---why, run away with your wife, to be sure! [*Exit, taking his arm.*

Mrs. S. Oh, George! run away with your wife.--- (*Going to follow them.*

Sir Mark. (*getting hold of her.*) No, no, Miss Tiverton, you shall have nothing to say to the profligate! ---go into that room 'till I find my old housekeeper! (*Puts her into room.*) They are all out of their senses! ---To be sure, this union I promised to Maria Darlington's departed father, poor Charles, when we were younkers!---Ha! ha!---well, well! youth and age have both their tantarums!

SONG. Sir Mark.

Love in season,
Like sneezing,
Is pleasing,
Not teazing;
It prickles,
And tickles,
With fanciful joys,
While toying,
Enjoying,
She sighs out,
And cries out—
"You devil,
Be civil,
And don't make a noise!"

Then pressing,
Caressing,
And ranting,
And chanting,
They rhyme away,
Time away,
In a love song;
Then dance it,
And prance it,
And thump it,
And stump it,
And bump it,
And rump it,
All the night long!
Love in season, &c.

II.

Youth over,
In clover
We muzzle,
And guzzle,
And toast it,
And roast it,
Like jolly old boys!
Break glasses,
Kiss lasses,
And pick up,
And hiccup;
And swaggering,
Staggering,
Finish our joys!
Then phthisic,
And physic,
Blue devils
Us levels,
'Till doctor
And proctor
Bespeak us a grave;
Then weepers,
And peepers,
And moaners,
And groaners,
And gay men
Cry "Amen!"
And chaunt out a stave!
Youth over, &c.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.

A pleasure ground: an angle of the scene displaying a handsome aviary, with a macaw and other birds---the aviary fronted with brass wire-work, and partially concealed by flowering shrubs—the rest of the scene arranged in a tasteful display of wood, water; and the agrèmens that form a handsome domain.

Enter Maria *and* Selborne.

Maria. And do you think I will ever be *reconciled* to Alfred?

Sel. Certainly I do. *(aside)*—Certainly I do not!—If I thought so I would prevent your meeting—my object is to punish him, and bring him to your feet.

Maria. Yes, I own I should like to see him at my feet.

Sel. And then to consign him to utter despair.

Maria. Yes, to utter despair—Well then, I consent to see him.

Sel. Throw your hair into a little disorder—and that, with a veil, will do very well for a desponding witless maiden—and when I clap my hands three times thus, (*clapping his hands*) then begin a Mad Bess kind of air—he's coming!

Maria. (*lifting herself on her toes.*) I would rather not see him.

Sel. I know that; but go, and mind the signal.

Maria. (*on her toes*) I think I ought to be sure 'tis he.

Sel. There can be no doubt of it---there are not two such.

Maria. (with earnest affection) No---that there are not.

Sel. Then don't let curiosity mar our plan.

Maria. I've no curiosity, I assure you.

[*Exit, raising herself and looking for* Alfred.

Sel. Poor Maria! how she detests him, ha! ha!---He's here---now for my assumed character of director. *(Retires up the stage.)*

Enter Fixture, *introducing* Alfred.

Fix. This way, sir, I can shew you all the grounds.

Alf. A noble mansion---strong and capacious---and the grounds handsome and varied. I understand they practice here the soothing system with their unhappy patients—which is certainly the most humane, if not the most sanative plan.

Fix. (*Pointing to Sel.*) My Master, sir.

Alf. Oh! rather young!

Sel. (*apart to Fixture.*) Keep my uncle out of the way. (*aloud*) You need not wait, (to *Alf.*)---A careful steady servant, sir, and seldom forgets any thing.

Fix. The five guineas for instance, (*aside to Sel.*)

Sel. There, confound you! (*Gives purse to* Fixture.) The object of your visit reflects the highest honour on your humanity and patriotism.

Alf. Yes, sir, disgusted with the insane creation, that take the privilege of roaming about this world, I wish to devote my time and wealth to those unfortunates, who are under salutary controul.

Sel. I regret I cannot, consistently with the rules of this establishment admit you at this hour into the interior.

Alf. I beg you will not infract any regulation on my account.

Sel. Many of the patients enjoy the salubrity of the garden, and, perhaps, the grounds may afford you some amusement. Favour me with your company.

[*Exeunt* Selborne *and* Alfred.

Enter Mrs. Fixture.

Fix. I must keep the secret safe from my wife. She has a ravenous curiosity, and particularly about young men.

Mrs. F. I a curiosity about young men! If I had, I should not have been content with such a curiosity of an old one.—No, sir, I defy your words---so, tell me directly who the young man is, that you so falsely say I've a curiosity about?

Fix. Well, I will—he's a Mr. Highflyer, a dasher on the turf.

Mrs. F. Keeps race-horses? Oh! how I do love Taunton races.

Fix. Oh, those cursed Taunton races! you never cleared up your privately going———

Mrs. F. Don't trouble your head about it, my dear.

Fix.. But, my dear, it does trouble my head,—I never think of it, but I feel much shooting pains—

Mrs. F. Who are those? I'm sure, that's the young dasher, in green.

Fix. As she deceived me about Taunton races, I'll deceive her—No, he in green is Sir Mark's nephew, Mr. Selborne, a sensible, discreet married man, like me. Come away, I say,—look! here's a pretty present (*shewing a purse*) and I'll tell you a great secret—so, come away.

[*Exeunt* Mr. *and* Mrs. Fixture.

Re-enter Selborne *and* Alfred.

Sel. So, sir, you have quarrelled with the world—you are a young misanthrope.

Alf. Yes, sir; as Hamlet says, man delights not me—nor woman neither—Woman! Oh! (*spitefully*) sir, I don't mean to annoy you with the lacerations of my wounded spirit, but—woman! Oh! (*recovering*) I really ask your pardon.—Pray, sir, what do you consider the most effective agent in soothing the irritation of the mind.

Sel. Music ;—but, perhaps, you are not an admirer?

Alf. Sir, to music I owe all my happiness, all my misery. I love it to distraction.

Sel. Distraction! Ah, sir! I have under my care an angel. Oh! such a voice! (*clapping his hands.*) Oh! such a voice! (*clapping his hands-*) Oh! such a voice! (*clapping again.*)

(Maria *sings the burthen of a Song.*)

That's she!

Alf. Her voice recalls———

Sel. Hush!

SONG. MARIA.

Hush thy vain sighs, fair maiden,
Tears flow no more in vain,
Heart cease thy fond upbraiding,
Lips no more breathe his name.
" He's gone! aye, gone for ever
" Far, far away from me,
" Fond Maiden's then endeavour
" To shun credulity!"

Alf. That song I well remember---it caused my quarrel with Maria. (*To Selborne.*) And has reason fled that form, which breathes such enchanting melody?

Sel. Alas! 'tis even so---poor Maria!

Alf. Maria. did he say!---May I, sir, presume to ask the name of the lovely sufferer?

Sel. Maria Darlington.

Alf. Horror! let me conceal my agitation! Oh! where's my resentment now? Know you the cause of her malady?

Sel. Unrequited love.

Alf. I the cause! I the destroyer of the proudest spirit that heaven ever breathed into a human form!---Might I be permitted to speak—(Selborne *shakes his head.*) Only to look on her?

Sel. That may be permitted---you see that bubbling brook (*points off*), its murmurs often invite her to wander near its margin---there we may look on her, and join our petitions for her recovery, and our *curses* on the *wretch* who could desolate such a paradise of sweets.

Alf. Yes, as you say, sir, curses on the wretch---(*embarrassed*) that---you are very good, sir--Come!

Sir Mark. (*without.*) Why, George! nephew!

Sel. Zounds! my uncle! what the devil shall I do now? he must not see me.

Alf. Who is that, sir?

Sel. An unhappy gentleman, resident here, you understand (*pointing to the head,*) harmless---perfectly harmless---fancies himself proprietor of this house and manor---you see he's in a shooting costume---and we

indulge him with a little unloaded pop-gun---seem to fall into his fancies.--'tis our plan of treatment.

Alf. Rely on me. But that angel——

Sel. I'll lead her to you weeping willow.--(Sir Mark *sings without.*)—Zounds! he's here !—(Sir M. *sings louder.*) Don't be alarmed, he is quite harmless. [*Exit.*

Alf. How unfit to humour the insanities of others, while I am scarcely on the verge of sanity myself.---Oh! Maria.

Enter Sir Mark, *with his gun, calling to one of his dogs---Doll---Doll---Doll, very loud.*

Sir Mark. This precious nephew of mine has thrown me into such a fever, I can't stay in the house.---I must just brush the home covers to cool and tranquillize my poor nerves.---Eh! what strange gentleman have we here?---(Alfred *nods.*) Strange gentleman! no---he seems a very familiar one.---Your servant, Sir---Pray! sir, to what may I attribute the honour of your presence in my grounds?

Alf. My grounds! poor fellow! I must indulge him. Sir, the beautiful disposition of hill, dale, wood, and water, has tempted me to intrude.

St. Mark. Intrude! sir, you are welcome---your hand.——

Alf. My hand---(*hesitates.*) Oh! he's harmless. (*Shaking hands.*) Sir, the charms of the scenery joined, to your good manners.------

Sir Mark. Sir, I flatter myself my manors are as good as any gentleman's in the county; though last winter I had the misfortune to lose all my Hares.

Alf. (*aside, sighing*). Had his head shaved, poor fellow!

Sir Mark. So, sir, if you're fond of sport, this is the place.

Alf. (*aside*). The place for sport — melancholy idea!

Sir Mark. What do you think of this piece?
(*giving him his gun.*)

Alf. Very handsome!

Sir Mark. And generally fatal; should you like to take a shot this morning?

Alf. If you please, sir. I must humour him. (*aside*). Egad, I'll pretend to kill that Macaw.

Sir Mark. I suppose you are pretty sure?

Alf. You shall see. (*aside*).

(*Fires—the Macaw drops from the perch.*)

Zounds! 'tis loaded!

Sir Mark. Damn the fellow! he has killed my Macaw!

Alf. To trust a loaded gun in such hands, was madness.

Sir Mark. It was indeed: so give it me instantly.

Alf. It has another barrel; I shall be shot here!—I won't give it you.

Sir Mark. Not give me my gun? Why, you damn'd impudent scoundrel!

Alf. Be quiet—be quiet—you know you have keepers here.

Sir Mark. Keepers! to be sure I have.

Alf. (*aside*). Come, he's not so mad, but he knows he has keepers! Be composed, or I'll call them.

Sir Mark. (*furious*). You call my keepers—you!

Alf. Oh! I must, I see—here, keepers, do your duty. [*Exit*

Sir Mark. He's gone off with my gun! Here, Bob! Thomas! Gregory! Fixture!—Stop that fellow with my gun.

Enter Selborne, *Game-keepers, and Servants.*

Sel. My dear Sir Mark, what's the matter?

Sir Mark. That damn'd swaggering rascal has killed my Macaw, and marched off with my gun!

Sel. (*stifling a laugh*). A stranger make such a disturbance! What could he aim at?

Sir Mark. Why, at my Macaw, I tell you!

Sel. Sir, I shall instantly demand of him an account of his conduct.

Sir Mark. Do, George.

Enter Fixture.

Fix. Here's your Worship's gun. (*apart to Selborne.*) What a pretty commence! (*aloud*)—but, I can't find the gentleman.

Sel. But *I'll* find him—at least, I hope so. (*aside.*)

Sir Mark. Do. But, George, where's your wife?

Sel. That's a good question!—Why, sir, did not you take her away from me? Did not——

Sir Mark. I take—why, zounds, you're thinking of Miss Tiverton again!

Sel. No, sir—yes, sir---no, sir---yes, sir——

Sir Mark. No, sir---yes, sir---you'll drive me mad, sir.

Sel. Sir!—

Sir Mark. I won't hear a word, sir---leave my presence, you profligate, or I'll—

[*Exit* Selborne.

Was there ever such a Tarquin---a Blue-beard? And was ever poor gentleman brought to such an untimely grave? Ah! they'll soon have their will—now I have made mine. Bob! here, load my gun—and just to raise my spirits, let's have a jolly Song and Chorus, my old boy! (*slapping* Fixture *on the back.*) and then for the merry Spaniels!

SONG AND CHORUS.

When the Southern breezes play—
The uplands let us gain,
Where ruddy health with smiles invites,
To join her sporting train!

CHORUS.

When the Southern, &c.

SOLO.

Unleach the merry pack—
See—see—they scent the gale!
Their chuckling throats
Repeat the notes,
Our sport it will not fail!
When the sun his course has run,
We trim the evening fire,
And gaily troll
The cheering bowl
To the health of wife and 'squire!

Then the song and joke prevail,
'Till the turret-bell strikes—One!
And the parting cup of ale
Proclaims our day is done!
When the southern, &c.

CHORUS.

When the southern, &c.

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

One half of the Stage is employed in displaying a deep-shaded grove---A marble urn is seen near the banks of a river---In the front is a weeping willow---The other half of the Stage shews the boundaries of a park, and an extensive country beyond it.

Enter Alfred.

Alf. There is the brook poor Maria augments with her tears---here, the willow she ruffles with her sighs —there dwell the echos that correspond to her plaintive minstrelsy—and this is thy work, thou unfeeling, but too bewitching man.—I really had no idea that my person and manners would have been so fatal.---In future, I shall mind what I'm about, and by an acrid severity, neutralize the horrid poison of this foolish tongue, and prevent further mischief to the soft, fond, believing sex.

Enter Selborne, *motioning to* Maria.

Well, Sir, where is she?

Sel. You may observe her in that grove.

Alf. I don't see---Yes, there I caught a glimpse---how my heart beats!

Sel. Sing to her, that will attract her.

Alf. Sing! sir, 'tis with shame and sorrow I own, that I can't sing.

Sel Not sing! poor man, I pity you.

Alf. Thank you, sir---I've done mischief enough, without singing.---Oh! if I could have sung——

Sel. See! she advances.

(Maria *walks down the grove, and seats herself under the willow.)*

Maria. Alfred!

Sel. That's the name she always pronounces.

Alf. I don't wonder at it! 'tis a very pretty name---Maria!

Sel. Hush!

Alf. (*apart*) He won't let me speak to her---I wish I could get rid of him.

Enter Fixture.

Fix. Sir your uncle is asking——

(*To* Selborne, *who stops his mouth.*)

Alf. (*To* Fixture.) Get your master away, and there's another guinea.

Sel. How provoking, that my presence should be required elsewhere---I'm very sorry——

Alf. So am I, sir; but, business, you know, sir---(*shouldering him.*)

Fix. (*pulling his coat.*) Yes, business, sir.

Sel. 'Tis unlucky!

Alf. Very true; but, in your situation, ceremony would be highly improper. (*pushing him.*)

Fix. Oh! very improper. (*pulling him by the coat.*)

(*Exeunt* Selborne *and* Fixture.)

Maria. Heigho!

Alf. She sighs, and parts the branches of the weeping willow, with her long interesting melancholy fingers.

Maria. (*advancing.*) Alfred!

Alf. Again, my name!

Maria. What proofs did I not give you of my love?---Did I not engross your time, exhaust your patience---did I not prefer tormenting you to any other of your sex?

Alf. Kind soul! she did!

Maria. And what was my return?---You smiled in my absence---went to sleep in my presence---preferred the Spring Meeting at the course of *New*market, to meeting with me in the Theatre of the *Hay*market.

Alf. I was that wretch.

Maria. And while my heart fluttered with the hope that you were arranging our marriage with Mr. Buckle, the Proctor, you were settling a race with Mr. Buckle, the jockey---then I lost my senses.

Alf. And I, my match---I'll venture to speak to her---Maria!

Maria. Who calls Maria?

Alf. One who loves her. Have you forgotten Alfred?

Maria. Oh no; but he forsook me: yet even then, when rivals asked my hand, my heart---at the concert---in the waltz---mark how I answered them.

SONG. MARIA.

When harmony awakens each bosom to joy,
Gay, artful lovers those moments employ
In dulcet notes sighing,
In cadences dying,
Each whispers, "Ah! can you these raptures destroy?"
I only reply---la, le, lal, &c. (*dances*)

II.

The maze of the waltz to the lover has charms,
It animates hope, it prudence disarms---
Pursuing, then pressing,
Encircling, caressing,
He sighs---"Ah! for ever repose in these arms---
I only reply---la, le, lal, &c. (*danees.*)

(*After the song, she sinks into dejection.*)

Alf. How she waltzes! What an invaluable wife I have lost! (*addresses her.*) But if Maria remembered Alfred, she would look kindly on him.

Maria. (*smiling*) Does she now look angry?

Alf. She would offer Alfred her hand.

Maria. Does she now refuse it?

(*he takes her hand.*)

Alf. She would find an asylum in his arms.

(*she sinks into his arms.*)

Enter Sir Mark.

Sir Mark. In a gallant's arms! Mercy on us! mercy on us! Aye, you may well hide your face.

(Maria *faintly shrieks, covers her face with her veil, and runs off.*)

Alf. Confound this vexatious, unfortunate!---and at such a moment. Yet what can I say to him. (*In a pathetic tone*) Why, unhappy old gentleman, will *you intrude* yourself?

Sir Mark. (*in the same tone*) Why, impertinent young jackanapes, will you intrude yourself!

Alf. (*irritated*) 'Sdeath! you have wounded my feelings.

Sir Mark. (*with the same irritation*) 'Sdeath, Sir, you have killed my macaw. Who the devil *are* you, and how dare you take freedoms with a married lady?

Alf. (*apart.*) Married! Maria married! But I must not irritate him; I must pursue the soothing system. Hush! be quiet; you'll bring on the fever.

Sir Mark. (*alarmed*) The fever! shall I? Oh dear! I hope not.

Alf. How he looks---'tis quite afflicting to see such a desolation.

Sir Mark. Do I look ill?

Alf. I pronounce him incurable.

Sir Mark. Incurable! I hope not. Don't shake your head---they tell me here I am getting better.

Alf. (*sighs, and smiles*) Aye, I dare say they do.

Sir Mark. I've had a consultation of London doctors.

Alf. No doubt, no doubt.

Sir Mark. (*fumbling for a letter, which he produces*) You see they give me hopes---look, pray look! (*gives the letter to* Alfred, *and begins counting his pulse rapidly*) One, two, three, four, five, six, &c.

Alf. What's this? "To Sir Mark Chase, Warrender Hall---free---Alfred Highflyer." My own frank! Warrender Hall! (*looks about*)---Sir! (*with energy*)

Sir Mark. (*alarmed*) What's the matter?

Alf. Warrender Hall!---it must be so. Sir, I am

compelled to ask a delicate question—but the asylum for—(*touching his head*)—

Sir Mark. I know what you mean—'tis the very next house—here, you may see the high wall.

Alf. (*jumps up*). I see the high wall—*that's* the house I ought to have been taken to.

Sir Mark. Yes. I rather think it is—Oh! this accounts for his killing my macaw.

(*A Lute is heard.*)

Alf. A harp! Aye, aye, they are following up their sport; but if I don't mar it—(*to Sir Mark*). I'll pretend to be deceived---I'll turn the tables on them: Egad! I'll give them a Roland for their Oliver.---Hark! what heavenly music! It comes from the azure canopy of—

Sir Mark. (*soothing him*). No, no, it comes from the blue parlour.

Alf. 'Tis the muse, Euterpe.

Sir Mark. No, 'tis Fanny Tiverton.

Alf. It whispers, 'tis a celestial lyre.

Sir Mark. 'Tis an infernal liar, if it whispers any such thing, because—

Alf. Divine music! What threw down the walls of Jerico? Music! What drew Eurydice from the shades? Music! How did Apollo build the Theban Wall? By Music!

Sir Mark. (*to himself*). Music, quotha! I wonder what tune Apollo fiddled when he turned mason?

Alf. What tune? Stoneybatter—Tol de rol---(*dances up the stage.*)

Sir Mark. 'Tis a clear case; I'll steal away, and give information at the next door, to secure him.---

[*Exit* Sir Mark.

Alf. Now, if I can find my *grooms*, and give them their *cue*. (*Going, sees.*) I shall be revenged on them all, for the trick they have play'd me.

Mrs. Fixture, *who enters.*

Mrs. F. Well---I've got the secret from my husband at last. Oh! here's the gentleman in the green coat---Pity such a handsome man as Mr. Selborne should be married---I hope your honour's well, and your spouse. (*curtsies*).

Alf. (*aside.*) Spouse!

Mrs. F. Yes, Mr. Selborne, your *real* spouse.

Alf. Selborne! real spouse! (*aside*).

Mrs. F. Ah! you are surprised at my knowing the secret! but my husband has told me all.

Alf. Your husband?

Mrs. F. Is Fixture, the butler---don't be angry with him for telling me.

Alf. Not at all; on the contrary, I'm quite delighted.

Mrs. F. I say! what a trick you played that Mr. Highflyer---how like a fool he must look, ha! ha!

Alf. I dare say he does, ha! ha! (*aside*). Remarkably pleasant this.

Mrs. F. And has Sir Mark no suspicion of the trick you played *him?*

Alf. Oh! of the trick we played Sir Mark? Oh, no; and so your husband told you all---what, all about---eh?---

Mrs. F. Yes, all about your private marriage with Miss Tiverton, and pretending to Sir Mark, you had married Miss Darlington, and---

Alf. What do I hear! (*aside*). Maria unmarried! I shall betray myself---What a lucky fellow Fixture is, to have so discreet, and yet so blooming, and bewitching a wife?

Mrs. F. (*simpering and curtseying*) Oh, dear sir! but he's so jealous---

Alf. 'Tis always the case---those husbands are sure to be most jealous, whose wives give them the least reason.---(*He puts his arm round her waist, and toys with her hand.*)

Mrs. F. Very true, sir.

Alf. They are sure to misconstrue the most innocent freedoms. (*Kisses her.*

Mrs. F. So they do, sir---now, I only went to Taunton Races with a friend, and he has made such a worret ever since, to find out who it was.

Alf. Taunton Races!---there's a rod in pickle for Mr. Fixture, who introduced me to this labyrinth of riddles. (*Aside.*

Mrs. F. Here comes my old man---pray, don't say a word about the secret, or the races. (*Exit.*

Alf. Oh, no!---

Enter Fixture.

Fix. (*placing his hand above his eyes, to assist his sight*). Why, yes,---it is her!

Alf. (*Kissing his hand to her*). Good bye, you sly rogue---I shall see you again at Taunton Races.

Fix. Taunton races! (*with solemn trepidation*)—What do you know of Taunton races?

Alf. That my *Filly* bolted, and—

Fix. Don't talk of *your* bolting Filly, but tell me about mine. What do you know of that young person?

Alf. Don't be agitated, there's no cause for alarm—I certainly had the pleasure of seeing her there; but she was under the protection of an elderly gentleman.

Fix. (*breathless*). Who?

Alf. A Sir Mark Chace, as I understood.

Fix. My master! oh, the hoary villain!

Alf. Therefore, your daughter—

Fix. Daughter! she's my wife! (*in agony*). If there be poison—or, what's more deadly—law, in the land, I'll——— [*Rushes out.*

Alf. Ha! ha! here comes the seducer—ha! ha!—I must avoid him, and give my grooms their instructions—I'll teach them to make me the victim of their plots. [*Exit.*

Enter Sir Mark.

Sir Mark. I've procured two persons to secure him; but where has the poor creature wandered?

Enter Mrs. Fixture.

Mrs. F. I saw my old man *scuttling* along!

Sir Mark. Hannah! Have you seen Mr. Highflyer?

Mrs. F. No, sir; but I've seen Mr. *Selborne*---What a fine, easy, graceless gentleman!

Sir Mark. Very.

Mrs. F. But, I've a notion he's a wild one; he began rumpling me about.

Sir Mark. Rumpling her about! was there ever such a devil of a fellow!

Enter Fixture, *behind, starts at seeing them.*

You must not listen to these young fellows—Fixture is disposed to be jealous,—therefore, my dear Hannah, be prudent, and you know, I'll always be your friend.—(*Chucks her under the chin.*)

(Fixture, *with dishevelled hair, and ghastly look, rushes in between them.*)

Fix. I dare say you will.

Sir Mark. Fixture! what's the matter with the man?

Mrs. F. He seems in pain—where's your complaint?

Fixt. In my head, in my heart—Taunton Races!—Oh, you young viper!—Oh, you old dragon!

Sir Mark. Old dragon! I see how it is—every soul in my family have lost their senses—and I shall soon be in the family way myself.

Fixt. Oh, you old poacher! There's your service—(*snapping his fingers*)—there's your livery—(*throwing it off*)—there's your baggage---(*handing his wife over to Sir* Mark)---I'll have law, and poison---an attorney, and an apothecary. (*Rushes out.*

Sir Mark. Baggage!---old poacher!---no constitution can stand this! (*Faintly.*

Mrs. F. Oh dear! oh dear!

Sir Mark. (angry) What's the matter *with* you?

Mrs. F. Indeed, I'm innocent of all such naughty doings, and I dare say, so are you, sir; at least, I'm sure you look innocent.

Sir Mark. Nonsense! now must I be tormented with her mewling. (*Mrs.* Fixture *sobs violently.*) Zounds! don't go into a fit. (*Runs, and supports her in his arms.*

Enter Mr. Mrs. Selborne, *and* Maria.

Come, come, don't take it so to heart, and I'll try to persuade Fixture, that he has no cause to be jealous of us---There, there!

(*Mr. Mrs.* Selborne *and* Maria *advance round Sir* Mark.)

Selb. The world's at an end!

Maria. Oh, you naughty man, you naughty man! ha! ha!

Sir Mark. Confound you all! What do you mean? Go along, you hussy! (*Exit Mrs.* Fixture.

Maria. Oh, Sir Mark!

Selb. Oh uncle!

Sir Mark. Oh nephew! you think by this ridiculous laugh to cover your own profligacy---she says you have been *rumpling* her about—she charges you with taking improper liberties.

Mrs. S. (*apart to* Selborne.) Is that true, George?

Selb. (*to her*) Upon my soul, I never saw her till this moment, I solemny assure you, my dear Fanny.

(*They go up the stage disputing.*

Maria. But now to find Alfred, and clear the mystery to him, I assure you, Sir Mark, your seeing Mr. Highflyer at my feet was the most innocent jest--

Sir Mark. I dare say it was (*incredulously*); but, poor fellow, he's past jesting with now.

Maria. What do you mean?

Sir Mark. Mean!---that he's gone---

Selb. Gone!

Sir Mark. Out of his senses.

Selb. Ha! ha!

Sir Mark. Come, come, 'tis no laughing matter---The poor creature owned he ought to have been taken to the next house---and when I told him you were married——

Maria. You told him I was married?

Sir Mark. To be sure.

Maria. Aye, then he stormed---

Sir Mark. No, he did not; he began dancing to the tune of Stoneybatter.

Maria. Dancing! then he is lost indeed.

Selb. Don't be alarmed---'tis some mistake of Sir Mark's.

Enter two Grooms (*running*)

1*st Groom.* You run that way, Sam---Stop---I've got him (*clasping* Selborne.)

Selb. (*shaking him off*) What, in the devil's name are you about?

1*st Groom.* Beg ten thousand pardons, sir---Oh,

my poor master!---Ladies, you have not got him about you?

Maria. What do you mean? what master?

1*st Groom.* Mr. Highflyer, ma'am.

Maria. What of him?

1*st Groom.* Escaped, ma'am.

Maria. Escaped!

St. Mark. Did not I say so?

1*st Groom.* Yes, ma'am, escaped from us, ma'am, and he gave us the slip, ma'am.---He'll do some mischief! eh! my poor---eh! there he is---I see him---follow. [*Exeunt Grooms.*

St. Mark. There, did not I tell you? (*a great noise of breaking glass.*) Confound him! he has got into the greenhouse---Here, Gardener---Fixture, Gregory!

Sel. Courage, Maria!

Maria. I shall never recover the shock to assume derangement---to---an unfortunate, that was its victim.---Dreadful idea! Oh, Alfred! and have I only found you faithful to lose you for ever!

Sel. Nay, I alone was to blame; let us seek him.

Maria. Music had always the greatest power over him. Sing my dear Frances, try, by its influence, to attract him hither. Come, sir,---poor lost Alfred! [*Exeunt.*

Enter Alfred, *his dress a little deranged.*

Alf. Ha! ha! I have escaped the Baronet,---now, if I can find the bride, I'll give Mr. Selborne a pleasant half hour.--Who have we here? by heaven's, a Hebe! (*retires.*)

SONG. MRS. SELBORNE.

Sweet soothing lyre,
Thy mystic power prevailing,
And my weak song,
To calm the troubled breast;
Lull by thy strains—
The anguished heart,
Hush by thy spell,
The troubled soul to rest.
Ah, pleasing power,
Hush every grove;
And harmonize the soul
To peace and love.

Alfred *advances.* Mrs. Selborne *utters a loud scream.*

Alf. 'Tis just, that the breast, which causes such emotions, should, in its turn, be agitated.

Mrs. S. Oh! he's quite temperate, I'm glad I have such influence over him---I must practice the soothing system.

Alf. Your voice, fair creature, wrapt my soul in sweet oblivion---but your animated beauties wake me to admiration, to delight.

Mrs. S. (*apart*) There's nothing flighty in that; on the contrary, I think he talks very sensibly. Sir, if my humble powers of pleasing can contribute to your happiness.

Alf. Oh lady, at first your eyes dazzled by their lustre; but the beams of kindness they now emit, kindle a flame, pure as the ray that vivified it.

Mrs. S. How rationally he expresses himself! but, sir, were you not attached to Miss Darlington?

Alf. Formerly; but she's now married, and, indeed, so happy, that I rejoice in their union---even now I saw the happy pair reclining on a mossy bank.

Mrs. S. (*alarmed*) On a mossy bank!

Alf. The grove echoed with their kisses.

Mrs. S. Kisses! where are they? (*going out.*)

Alf. (*restraining her*) 'Tis a retreat, hallowed by wedded love---we must not profane it.

Enter Selborne *and* Maria, (*observed by Alfred.*)

Maria. There they are.

Selb. But what are they about?

Alf. Instead of interrupting, let us emulate their happiness. May I not be allowed to approach the shrine of my adoration?

Mrs. S. I must not irritate him (*aside.*)

Alf. May I not be permitted to enfold the object of my idolatry; to offer an oblation of ten thousand kisses. (*Takes her round the waist, and kisses her hand rapturously.*)

(Selborne *and* Maria *rush in between them.* Alfred *throws himself into a garden chair, amuses himself in blowing the leaves of a flower, or some idiotic trifling.*)

Selb. Fanny! what are you about, Fanny?

Maria. My dear friend, what are you about?

Mrs. S. Practising the soothing system.

Selb. The soothing system! zounds, ma'am, the irritating system.

Maria. Is this your friendship? this your return for my—

Mrs. S. Acting to perfection,—the character of a loving wife.

Selb. To be found in a man's arms!

Mrs. S. To recline on a mossy bank,—to make a grove echo with kisses!

Selb. Madam, the evidence of my eyes—

Mrs. S. Sir, the evidence of my ears—

Maria. Hush! hush! you forget the unhappy object who sits there, unconscious of the misery he occasions—Selborne, be composed—depend on't, he mistook your wife for me.

Selb. Possibly; but I'll take care he don't make the same mistake again.

(Taking his wife under his arm, and wiping the hand Alfred *has kissed.)*

Maria. Mention my name to him—say I'm near, but with caution.

Selb. (*to* Alfred) Sir, I believe you are acquainted with Miss Darlington?

Alf. Oh, yes, sir—I knew Miss Darlington.

Sel. She is here.

Alf. Is she?—Ah! how do you do? Give you joy—nice weather, is not it—Been at Brighton lately?

Maria. Oh! quite lost—quite irrational!

Mrs. S. I own, I cannot perceive it.

Alf. Ladies, won't you walk, and enjoy this smiling landscape? How lovely nature has here distributed her charms *(between the ladies)* I've just come from Brighton. Bow, wow, wow, *(barks like a dog)*—been bathing there---the doctors call it being *dipt*---Dam' the fellows!---they almost drowned me.

Maria. But---but---why---did---did they order you to be *dipt?*

Alf. Why? Ask me not the cause---it strikes upon my brain. 'Tis here! and here! and there! and every where! Ha! ha! ha!---Oh! oh! *(seems convulsed.)*

Maria. What's the matter?

Alf. Spasms! spasms!---Ha! ha! ha!

(Rises up, seems more convulsed, and falls into Maria's *arms, exhausted.)*

Maria. Oh! that he could know my feelings---that he could hear my vow, that I will never be another's.

Alf. (*starting up*) But will you be mine? Are you not married?

Maria. Are you not out of your senses?

Alf. Yes, with joy! Oh! Maria, how we have trifled with our happiness. But explain.

Sel. Suffice it, my pretended marriage with this lady, was to prevent my uncle disinheriting me.

Alf. And your real wife———

Sel. Is here—let this embrace vouch for my veracity and my happiness. (*Embraces* Mrs. Selborne.)

Alf. And this for mine (*embracing* Maria.)

Enter Sir Mark *and Domestics.*

Sir Mark. There they are, all hugging again, madman and all. You audacious devils! what are you laughing at? But you shall be divorced—you shall be divorced if it cost me ten thousand pounds.

Sel. Sir, it shan't cost you a penny.

Maria. Not a penny, Sir.

Sir Mark. Why, ar'n't you married, George?

Sel. Yes, Sir—to this lady.

Sir Mark. And you are———(*to* Maria.)

Maria. Going to be married to this gentleman. (*bowing.*)

Sir Mark. But, George, to deceive your uncle.

Sel. Sir, that horrid new shilling you threatened me with.

Sir Mark. What, my favourite Maria to plot against me! Well, well, come here, you pretty rogue, and kiss your uncle (*kisses* Mrs. Selborne.) Well, now, I have only to alter my will, and perhaps the day after to-morrow you may be in possession; at present, I'm as well as any man in England.

Maria. Then, dear Sir Mark, let well alone.

Sir Mark. And don't yon want to dance over my grave?

Mrs. S. No, Sir; we want you to dance at our wedding.

Sir Mark. Do you? Ecod! here goes---let's have the fiddles. Maria, you shan't want a dower.

FINALE.

Heart with heart uniting,
Village bells inviting,
Marriage vows delighting,
If you allow the bands.

CHORUS.

Heart with heart, &c.

SECOND SOLO.

I your presence courting,
Ask your kind resorting,
To protect your sporting
O'er our fairy lands.

CHORUS.

Heart with heart, &c.

THE END.

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Burlington Arcade,
May, 1819.

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"None but himself can be his parallel."

THE STEWARD;

OR,

FASHION AND FEELING:

A Comedy,

IN FIVE ACTS,

(FOUNDED UPON THE DESERTED DAUGHTER,)

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE ROYAL, COVENT GARDEN,

SEPTEMBER 15th, 1819.

London:

Printed by W. Hughes, Maiden Lane, Covent Garden,

FOR JOHN LOWNDES, 25, BOW STREET.

1819.

Price Three Shillings.

FOR THAT

TASTE AND SPIRIT

WHICH HAS MADE COVENT GARDEN THEATRE ONE OF

THE MOST SPLENDID TEMPLES OF THE

DRAMATIC MUSE.

FOR THAT

LIBERALITY TO AUTHORS

Which leaves the Dearth of Dramatic Talent no Apology from the Want of Encouragement;

AND FOR HIS

Kind Attention and Suggestions during the Production of the present Play;

THE STEWARD

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED TO

HENRY HARRIS, ESQ.

PREFACE.

It has been with great diffidence that I have ventured to alter any production of so powerful a pen as that of Mr. Holcroft; and one of my chief inducements in its publication is, that I might possess an opportunity of stating to my Readers my reasons as my apology.

It had long been the regret of many Lovers of the Drama, that a Play, possessed of so much merit as the Deserted Daughter, which had itself been founded on Cumberland's Fashionable Lover, should lay unacted and neglected, from the introduction of characters and incidents, which, however they might strengthen the interest of the piece, were in some measure revolting to delicacy and good feeling. For, whatever additional interest may be gained by the idea, that a parent is in danger of sacrificing his own child to infamy; it is yet difficult to separate this additional excitation of feeling from disgust; and more particularly as in this instance, the parent was not only the cause of his daughter's having been placed in the power of a woman, infamous enough to make a traffic of her virtue; but is actually one of the persons to whom she offers the sacrifice of that virtue for pecuniary recompence.

It was the Poet's intention to depict in the strongest manner the evils of disowning a child; and the distressful situation of an object thus deserted; and the incidents of the play, as they originally stood, are doubtless the most dreadful that could have arisen from such a circumstance. Thus far his intention

succeeded; but the question is, whether the feelings excited by seeing a young and innocent girl placed in such a situation, and subjected to the addresses of her own parent; did not more than counterbalance any pleasure arising from that additional interest in her fate, created by means that would not bear analization without sensations of terror and disgust.

The passions of human nature are not only the materials *from* which the Dramatic Poet must frame his composition; but they are also those *upon* which he must work in the effects of his production on an audience. It is his province to excite the interests and feelings of the Spectators to the greatest possible degree; and whether those interests and feelings are relaxed into sympathy, at suffering virtue, or nerved to indignation at triumphant villany; the object of the Poet is equally obtained, and he establishes his right to dramatic celebrity—But there are certain chords of the human mind which cannot be touched without creating discord—and though the art of the Poet may reach them, the heart shrinks from their vibration. So difficult is it in an advanced state of society for the dramatic Poet to learn precisely the

Quid deceat, quid non; quò virtus; quò ferat error.

To exclude this dangerous interest; and to extract these revolting situations from the Deserted Daughter, was the first object; and to accomplish this I have made Item, instead of her father, the cause of Joanna's danger from the libertinism of Lennox, and have altered the character and mansion of the infamous Mrs. Enfield into that of one of Item's dependents. By making a marriage with her, of consequence to the Steward's avaricious schemes, I have accounted for his pursuit of her, and without, I trust, decreasing the interest that is excited in her fate. This alteration necessarily obliged me to re-write and re-model a great portion of the Comedy, and I felt as I proceeded, that much sympathy in the misfortunes of Mordent, and in the distress of Joanna, was lost from the turbulent and illnatured pettishness of the one, and the physiognomical rudeness of the other; for

nothing can be more subversive of good manners, or deduct more from the interest excited by the misfortune of a young and handsome girl, than to hear her at first sight begin to analize the expression of a gentleman's features, and tell him he has the eye of a libertine and the mouth of a deceiver. I have therefore attempted to soften the asperity of Mordent's character throughout, and have re-written that of Joanna up to the 5th Act. I changed the character of Donald into that of Jonathan Winter, a Yorkshireman, because I was informed, that in spite of the excellence of the original performance of that part, its breadth of dialect rendered it nearly unintelligible.

The alteration of Lady Anne Mordent from a sentimental and submissive wife, to a woman of fashion, and a participator in her husband's extravagance, was subsequently adopted, from an ingenious suggestion that it would add spirit to the play, and still more tend to relieve the character of Mordent, both of which objects are, I think, attained by it—altho' it naturally led to the alteration of a great portion of the character, or rather the dialogue of Mrs. Sarsnet.

The character of Item has been altered and added to considerably; and the Account Book, the loss of which betrays the perfidy of the Steward, and produces such a powerful situation in the original play, has been made of more consequence by its introduction into the first Act, as the audience were before totally unacquainted with the existence of such a document, and of course quite unprepared for the consequences of its loss.

Such are the principal alterations that have been made in the play; and they have been made with a view of still pointing out the dangers of such errors as those of Mordent, and of holding up the villany of a perfidious confidential servant, like Item, to execration, both of which are the main objects of the original.

In the performance of this task, I should be unjust not to acknowledge how greatly indebted I have been to the suggestions of

Mr. Henry Harris, and to thank him for that attention to the play which has made it what it is.

Having thus preserved the original story complete, however I may have differed in its developement, I trust I shall be forgiven for alterations, which have no other view than to adapt to the feelings of a modern audience, an interesting play, of one of the most deservedly successful and popular writers of the age.

Where every department was so excellent, it would be invidious to make distinction; I must therefore thank the whole of the Performers for those exertions to which I am so infinitely indebted for the success of THE STEWARD.

PROLOGUE.

When birds new fledg'd first quit their natives trees,
And spread their tender pinions to the breeze;
The parent wing supports them in their flight,
And guides them safely to the destin'd height.
So, our young Bard,—unpractis'd and unknown,
Afraid to brave the Drama's realms alone,—
Afraid, unhelp'd, to meet the critic sneer,
That stops so many in the same career;
From Holcroft's nervous wing has pluck'd to-night,
The strength he trusts to, in his daring flight!
'Twas thus the son of Dædalus essay'd
To stem the winds on wings another made,
And safely through the fields of æther flew;
But, when Apollo's realms appear'd in view,
His mad ambition led the hero on,
In vain attempt, to reach his dazzling throne;
But soon his pinions droop'd beneath the glow,
Which hurl'd him headlong to the depths below.
And our poor Bard an object here hath view'd,
As bright as that which Icarus pursued;
But ah, he trusts your hands will deign to teach,
It is not quite so far beyond his reach.
The sun he aims at, shines in your applause,
Your smiles obtain'd—our Poet gains his cause.
And shelter'd thus by a long-established name,
Plants the first flower in his wreath of fame.

EPILOGUE.

My gracious! was ever any thing so shocking?---
Just half undrest---and going home---provoking---
Thus to be call'd and hurried from my room,
And then sent here, to learn our Poet's doom,
And be beset---by Author---Prompter---all agog
That I, forsooth, should speak the Epilogue,
And praise the Play---I thought I'd done enough,
To act, and speak their sentimental stuff.
" So, bless me, Mister Bard," said I---" you see
I'm half undrest"---" Quite in the mode," said he.
" Why, Sir," said I---" a line or two---or so---
But then, I've doff'd my feathers, and you know"---
" I do," the Author cries---" that woman's chiefest boast,
Is, unadorn'd, to be adorn'd the most——
So, speak my Epilogue,"---and then the saucy chap
Said---" that you might place a feather in my cap."
Thus said our Bard---and Bards have winning ways,
When round their brows they wish to twine the bays;
Or when the magic of their flattering art,
Would twine themselves round foolish woman's heart.
A Bard---but hold---perhaps you do not know it,
That our poor Bard to-night's but half a Poet:
He found a sad *Deserted Daughter* on the shelf,
And took the pretty creature to himself.
You must not think the action worthy blame,
Since, where's the MAN that would not do the same?
But whole or half, the truth I still must tell,
I do not think he's used me quite so well;
Thus of the pride of fashionable life,
At last to make a dull domestic wife,
Like those dear sober souls who never swerve,
But Pickles make, their husbands to preserve.
You'll say, 'tis not quite fair, that I, who came
To plead the Poet's cause, should stop to blame---

But yet, no matter---I told them they were wrong,
To trust a woman's never-ceasing tongue.---
So to our theme---yon Critic seems to say---
Why has the Poet altered thus the Play?
To which I answer, exactly as the case is---
That the old Bard made ladies hide their faces,
By laying all his scenes in naughty places.
If to our Poet's reasons still the Critic deaf is,
He begs he'll buy the Play, and read his Preface.
Now to my message---Does your sanction give
Permission for our Comedy to live?---
If those kind hands support the Poet's cause,
And *our* poor efforts merit your applause,
Your smiles to-night, in Gratitude's account,
Will add one ITEM to the great amount.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Mordent,	Mr. Macready.
Cheveril,	Mr. Jones.
Lennox,	Mr. Conner.
Item,	Mr. W. Farren.
Grime,	Mr. Blanchard.
Clement,	Mr. Abbott.
Jonathan Winter,	Mr. Emery.
Lady Anne,	Mrs. Davison.
Joanna,	Miss Foote.
Mrs. Sarsnet,	Mrs. Gibbs.
Mrs. Penfold,	Miss Green.
Betty,	Mrs. Sexton.

THE STEWARD.

ACT I.

SCENE I. *The House of* Mr. Mordent.

Mordent *and* Jonathan Winter, *(in anger.)*

Wint. Well, zur—It doan't signify nothing argufying the topic. Ize tell ye my mind! Discharge me, an you wull; I an't been more than thirty years in the family, 'tis true; but that's long enow to gain a settlement i' thirty parishes, tho' not mayhap in one heart;—and if ye wull be guilty of foul deeds——

Mor. (*Looking anxiously round.*) Will you speak in a lower key? Recollect, Jonathan, recollect the consequences of discovery.

Wint. I tell ye what will be the consequences, if I doan't discover her, Ize advertize for her i'the public papers—aye, I wull. So now, mak' up your mind to ha' your name imprinted at full length.

Mor. (*Terrified.*) Print my name!

Wint. My name's not Winter, if I doan't.

Mor. Nay, nay, pray speak lower. Recollect, my wife is within hearing.—The girl is safe, no doubt. You know, I did not, I could not abandon her.

Wint. I doan't know what great people may mean by abandon. But, ye wad nae acknowledge her, wad nae see her—and wad ye ha' the heart now to expose her to—(*holding up his hands in terror.*)

Mor. What?

Wint. Tramp the streets! or, what is as bad, to the arts and wiles of old Item.

Mor. The arts of Item! What do ye mean?

Wint. What do I mane? Why, I mane, that my mind misgi's me, and if I see clear, some o'his devildom schemes do hang on the lass—that's all.

Mor. Oh, impossible! impossible!

Wint. I tell ye, 'tis possible. And why should you desart her, forsooth? Because she is what 'em calls a natural child! Now, in my mind, to beget children, and then turn them adrift, to beg, steal, or starve, makes a father a damn'd deal more unnatural than the child!—I doan't know what you may think, but that's my humble opinion.

Mor. Would you tell all the family? Expose me to my wife?

Wint. Ize expose ye tull the whole world, if I doan't find her—Though, the Lord knows, it woan't be much the better for her, if I do, for it strikes me vary strongly, ye are diced, and drabbed, and squandered, and mortgaged, till ye woan't scarce ha' change for a thin sixpence for yoursel!

Mor. This is too much—you forget your station.

Wint. Forget my station! No, no, Maister Mordent, 'tisn't Winter that forgets his station, when he warns you against the devildoms, as I call them, of that Belzebub Steward!—But, tak' warning! I ha' toud ye long ago, and I tell ye again, he ain't a bit better nor a rascal.

Mor. 'Tis false—you mistake him, I tell you! If the earth hold an honest man, Mr. Item is he. In all my difficulties, where have I found assistance, but from Item?

Wint. Yes—He pretends to borrow the cash for ye, which he lends himsel; and your wealthy possessions will soon be all his own.

Mor. Nay, nay; has he not ever dissuaded me, even in your presence, from the ruinous expedients which my necessities have obliged me to adopt?

Wint. Yes; he ha' led ye to a precipice, which he bags

ye woan't leap, while at the same time, he pushes you down headlong.

Mor. I say, 'tis false! His truth, integrity, and zeal, are unexampled.

Wint. Mercy on us, ye're bewitched!

Mor. Winter, you drive me mad! What a den of misery is this world! Swarming with one set of fiends, that raise the whirlwind of the passions; and with another, that beset and tantalize the bewildered wretch, for having been overtaken by the storm.

Wint. Poor Joanna! what can ha' become on her? But now, remember, if I doan't find her, Ize keep my word.

Mor. As to Joanna, wait patiently. She's safe!—I have done a violence to my own feelings as a father, in depriving her of the right of a child. But have I not fifty times descended to explanation, and shewn you, that I must not, cannot own her?

Wint. Dare not, you mane. Ah, maister, maister, ye bogle at shadows.

Mor. Shadows! Winter, you know not what you say. The public clamour and disgrace attached to the discovery; the well-merited reproaches of Lady Anne, for the long concealment of such a circumstance; the resentment of her imperious family—Are these shadows?

Enter Mrs. Sarsnet.

Mrs. S. What is it you are pleased to be talking, pray, about my lady, Mr. Yorkshireman?

Wint. Troth! I ha'n't a word to say against her, Mrs. Cockney.

Mrs. S. Against her! No, sir, my lady may defy her worst enemies, though there are folks who ought to adore the very ground she treads upon, that use her like a Turk.

Mor. How now, Sarsnet? Did your mistress bid you behave with impertinence?

Mrs. S. She, indeed! no, no, your example and com-

mands have made her almost as great a rake as yourself; yet she'd never respect any thing of that kind, if I didn't put it into her head. She bid me always behave with affability and decorum: and so I would, if I could. But, it would provoke an angel!

Mor. And what is it your wisdom thinks so provoking?

Mrs. S. To see a sweet lady, that was made to live always in a family way, driven out for to seek for pleasures in routs and nonsense, and when at home, to see her laugh, when she means for to cry; then, when some folks are in sight, pretend to smile, and be all assignation and contentment, when, all the while, I know, her poor heart is ready to break.

Mor. Then she complains to you?

Mrs. S. I said no such thing, sir. No, she complains to no Christian soul, more's the shame! I wish some folks had a little of my spirit; other folks, mayhap, mut find the difference.

Wint. Spirit! Ecod, you needn't tell us o'that, Mrs. Sarsnet.

Mrs. S. A poor, weak woman, who can only take her own part by crying and fainting.

Wint. Crying and fainting! Come, come, Mrs. Sarsnet, there are some poor, weak women, that ha' got tongues and nails, you know.

Mrs. S. Have they, Mr. Snapshort? Why, then, if I had you for a husband, mayhap I would go for to let you see that I could use them.

Wint. I dare for to say as how you would. The devil doubt you.

Mrs. S. It's a shame, Mr. Winter, for you to be getting into corners, and to be a whispering, and a peering, and a plotting, to my lady's dishonour.

Wint. (*Angry.*) I plotting! Come, now, you'd better hold your tongue, Mrs. Sarsnet.

Mor. Silence with you both!

Mrs. S. You ought to be quite shameful of making yourself a skip-jack go-between.

Wint. A skip-jack! Oh, 'tis very well, Mrs. Sarsnet. You hear, sir, the thanks I get; ye hear, I am a go-between.

Mrs. S. Yes, yes; we know that very well, Mr. Winter.

Wint. But I'm not sic a go-between as ye, Mrs. Malapert, may think me. No, no, I ha' been a trust-worthy caterer to the family; (*to Mordent*) a slave to your and your lady's routs, and your supperings, and your dinnerings! Ye may ha' made me your purveyor, but dam' me if any mon ever yet made Jonathan Winter his pander!

Mor. Begone! See if Mr. Item is returned.

Mrs. S. Ah, there's another.

Wint. Skip-jack! Go-between! Forsooth. Ecod, if you war Mrs. Winter, I'd teach ye to keep a civil tongue in your teeth, ecod, I would. [*Exit.*

Mor. Did your lady, I say, instruct you to behave with this insolence?

Mrs. S. You know very well, sir, that my lady is the most imprudent of wives; and would have been better than the best, if you had but let her have had her own way. She sent me on a civil message, and bid me speak with properiety; and so, if speaking one's mind, and telling the truth, be a fault, its all my own.

Mor. I'll put an end to this.

Mrs. S. Oh, to be sure: you may tell my lady, and get me turned away, if you please; because, I know very well, if you bid her, she will do it.

Mor. True; she has ever met my most capricious wishes with compliance, nay, in the instance of fashionable extravagance to which I urged her, from my foolish vanity, has outstripped them, and I—oh, Prometheus and his Vulture is no fable! (*aside.*)

Mrs. S. Yes, yes; I know she will turn me away; but as it is all for pure love of my lady, I'm sure the Earl of Oldcrest, her father, will give me a situation. He knows, mayhap, more than you may go for to think; so does the Viscount, her brother too; her cousin, Lady Mary, and her uncle, the Bishop; and every body is not obliged to be so blind, and so

good tempered, and so replying as my lady, never to answer a word, indeed, as she never does.

Mor. Ah! what is it they know? (*aside*) Can Winter have betrayed me?

Mrs. S. That's more than I can say; but they have all been here, and my lady desires to speak with you.

Mor. (*aside*) Indeed! Tell her I have no leisure—that I am particularly engaged. (*aside*) I dare not see her!

Mrs. S. Ha! I told my lady so before I came.

Mor. Begone! inform your lady, that I will seek some other opportunity. (*aside*) To what a state of wretchedness must that heart be reduced, which trembles at meeting the eye of her it loves! Cursed infatuation! to what hast thou driven me! [*Exit.*

Mrs. S. I prognostified the answer! a good-for-nothing chap! I know as well as any body what is becoming of a husband. He should love his wife dearly, by day and by night! he should wait upon her; and give her her own way; and keep her from the cold, and the wet; and provide her with every thing comfortable; and if she happen to be in an ill humour, should coax her, and bear a little snubbing patiently. Humph! the fellows! what are they good for else I wonder! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

The Steward's Room.

Item, *alone.*

Item. (*Examining accounts, and putting away books.*) Ha! ha! ha! 'tis well, very well! Nothing rejoices my heart so much as casting an account—when the balance is in my own favour! I feel my heart sparkle with delight, as it runs from units to tens, from tens to hundreds, and from hundreds to thousands,—when they're to be put on the right side of the ledger. 'Twill do! the web is woven, the fly is

in the midst of it, and every moment strengthens the toil, and involves him further in the labyrinth! One more deed signed, and the proud Mr. Mordent is in my power! 'till then I must still smooth my brow; but once sure, once *certain*, Item's turn will come, and all his years of anxious labour shall be repaid; and who can say it is not right, that wisdom should thus thrive upon folly? *(putting books on table.)* You may lie there—you all bear fair faces, that may be perused by any one, and do not present one blot to make the most rigid inspector cavil at poor Item. But you, *(putting one book in his bosom)* who contain the true account of all my honest, and laborious gains, lay next my heart, that beats with pleasure, while it hugs you. Ah! I hear somebody on the stairs. *(hides book quickly.)*

Enter Grime.

Item. (eagerly.) My dear Grime, I am glad you are come. Well, is the deed prepared?

Grime. Ready for sealing. Mr. Mordent never examines what he signs; he trusts all to you.

Item. We cannot be too safe. But, this other affair? this Joanna? What have you done? Have you taken her to Mrs. Penfold's?

Grime. Really, Mr. Item, she is so fine a creature, that, when I deceived her, I am not a true Christian if I did not feel such a twinge here.

Item. There! why, what have you got there more than any where else? A twinge, indeed! Curse your twinges! Is she safe? Are you sure Winter suspects nothing?

Grime. No, no, I took care of that, and have made certain that she left no clue to her retreat.

Item. (joy.) That is well! that is well!—'twill do, 'twill do! And so, she's a fine creature? Item, you're a lucky dog! My scheme succeeds in every point! And I say, Grime, the girl's handsome, is she?

Grime. Handsome! I can't say I'm a judge of beauty.

Item. Do her eyes sparkle, you old rogue?

Grime. Why, they do twinkle, to be sure!

Item. Has she roses, lilies, a fine neck, round arms ——?

Grime. Yes, yes; roses in plenty! But, I don't understand why Mr. Mordent wishes to put her out of the way.

Item. I dare say you don't; but I do. He has various tormentors; his wife, or rather, her proud relations, are among the chief; and he dreads they should come to the knowledge of this secret. But, his strongest terror, is, of being detected in having for years disowned a child, who, if now produced, would be his everlasting disgrace.

Grime. Does he know that his daughter is now in the house of Mrs. Penfold?

Item. Not a word. His plan, for the present, is to settle her in some profession; for this, he will bestow a thousand pounds, which, ha! ha! ha! I am to expend.

Grime. (*significantly.*) Or keep!

Item. (*aside.*) Plague! I have said too much!

Grime. O, ho! a thousand pounds! (*aside.*)

Item. That—that, my dear Grime, would be a paltry motive! I have others, others of more consequence, Grime!

Grime. (*aside.*) I'll have my share!

Item. Mr. Mordent has been all his life squandering, like a blockhead, what I have been prudently picking up.

Grime. And pretty pickings you have had, Mr. Item.

Item. (*exulting.*) I have him in the toils! Interest accumulating upon interest, and all in arrear! I can foreclose upon him when I please, for all, except the Berkshire estate; and by this second mortgage, agreeably to the deed you have brought, equity of redemption will be forfeited, and that, as well as the rest, will then be mine!

Grime. If he had but signed and sealed!

Item. Which he shall do this very day!

Grime. Then, what have you to fear from Joanna?

Item. Much—very much—an action of recovery.

Grime. How so? she has no title—she is illegitimate.

Item. No, no; a lawful daughter, born in wedlock; her mother poor, but virtuous, and died in child-bed. Fearful it should injure his second marriage, with Lady Anne, he never produced the infant, but told his man, Winter, it was a natural daughter, and by his intermission, secretly maintained, and had her educated; and because this Winter has got the fool's disease, pity—pity! ha! ha! ha! he loves the girl so much, that he has threatened to make Mordent own his daughter.

Grime. To prevent which, he has agreed——

Item. That I should place her out of Winter's reach. But, he little thinks, I intend to make him own her myself.

Grime. You?

Item. Yes, I! to prevent her claims from affecting my earnings, I intend to vest the power of recovery in myself.

Grime. As how?

Item. As how? By marrying her, to be sure!

Grime. By marrying her! *You!* Ha! ha! ha!

Item. Yes, by marrying her! (*aside*) What the devil does the fellow laugh at? Yes, by marrying her, Grime; by making her Mrs. Item! Aye, and I'll compel the proud Mr. Mordent, and Lady Anne, and her proud family, to own —aye, and court Mr. Item, as their relation, or, Mr. Item will know the reason why.

Grime. Marry her! Well, well, 'tis a strange world! But now, Mr. Item, give me leave to say a word or two on my own affairs.

Item. To be sure, my dear friend! Speak, and spare not.

Grime. There is a thousand pounds, you mentioned.

Item. (*aside.*) Hem!

Grime. Then, the premium on this mortgage; in short, Mr. Item, I do all your business, stand in your shoes.

Item. You are my right hand, the apple of my eye! (*aside*) a hypocritical rascal!

Grime. Ay, but——

Item. The dearest friend I have on earth! (*aside*) I wish the earth covered him!

Grime. The division of profits——

Item. Don't mention it. Am I not your friend? I shall not live for ever.

Grime. No, nor I neither. Friendship——

Item. Don't think of it. You can't distrust me, the first and best friend you ever had.

Grime. Fine words.

Item. (*evading.*) Yonder is my nephew! (*calls*) Clement!

Enter Clement.

Clem. Sir!

Item. Fetch the title deeds of the Berkshire estate from my good friend Mr. Grimes.

Grime. Well, but——

Item. Any time to-day.

Clem. Very well, Sir. [*Exit* Clement.

Grime. Once again, Mr. Item.

Item. And, Clement!

Grime. I say the division——

Item. (*listens.*) Hark! I hear Mr. Mordent!

Grime. (*aside.*) It shall not pass off thus—I begin to know you.

Item. I would not have you seen, just now, my dear Grime! my kind friend! some other opportunity! Pray oblige me!

Grime. Well, well. (*aside*) The next time we meet, you shall know more of my mind. [*Exit* Grime.

Item. (*angry.*) The rascal begins to grow troublesome! Take care of the steps, good Mr. Grime! I wish he'd break his neck! [*follows.*

Enter Mordent.

Mor. What is life?—a continual cloud; pregnant with

mischief, malignity, disease, and death! Happiness?—an ignis fatuus. Pleasure?---a non-entity. Existence?—a misfortune, a burden! None but fools condescend to live. Men exert their whole faculties to torture one another. Animals are the prey of animals. Flowers bloom to be plucked and perish! The very grass grows to be torn, and eaten; trees to be mangled, sawed, rooted up, and burned. The whole is a system of exquisite misery, and I have my full proportion. Oh! this girl! why am I thus perturbed concerning her? She can but be wretched, and wretchedness is the certain fate of all!

Enter Item.

Well, my good Mr. Item, this poor Joanna! What have you done? Can you secure her happiness? Pshaw! Can you lighten her misery? I can think of nothing but her, tho' distraction is in every thought.

Item. 'Tis a serious affair; very serious. But I have managed the matter well; the young lady shall be made happy; I will take care of that.

Mor. Turned adrift, rejected of all, no relation, no friend, never acknowledged, never!

Item. My advice, you know, Sir, was at once boldly to produce her, as your daughter. No matter for the impertinent clamour and questions of who her mother was, and what became of her; why the child was never owned; where she had been concealed, and for what purposes? All these questions *might* be asked by your friends, and by those of Lady Anne ——

Mor. Ay, ay, ay! The malignant sneers of friends, the cutting calumny of enemies, the reproaches of Lady Anne, the insults of her pompous proud family! I'll try to think no more of it! Then, this Berkshire mortgage!

Item. Ay, there again! totally opposite to my advice.

Mor. Can you shew me any other possible way of paying my debts?

Item. The danger of signing it is extreme!

Mor. 'Tis ruin! I feel 'tis utter ruin, and cannot but hesitate.

Item. Yet, young Cheveril, I own, has demands.

Mor. Which must be paid.

Item. Then, the outstanding bills—tradesmen are provokingly insolent! Threaten executions daily.

Mor. Ay, ay; they, like the rest, have their appointed office of torture.

Item. Well, remember, I have given you fair warning.

Mor. Certainly! You do your part, and with the best intentions; goad, and sting, and add your quantum to the sum of suffering! The consistency of evil is amazing! good and bad, all concur. Is the deed ready?

Item. I must first read it through.

Mor. Do so. I leave it all to you.

Item. (*with quickness.*) But that will not take ten minutes.

Mor. I will be back presently. The gulf is before me, plunge I must, and to plunge blindfold will be to cheat the devil of some part of the pain. [*Exit.*

Item. (*following.*) Nay, if you will not be warned, 'tis not my fault. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

The Dressing Room.

Lady Anne *and* Mrs. Sarsnet, *discovered.*

Lady A. Well, well, Sarsnet, you have said enough about refusing to come; though, for the life of me, I can't see why he should thus avoid me.

Mrs. S. Ah, but I can guess though. He's ashamed—he's ashamed of his neglects, and of his unpatrimonial and disconjugal behaviour.

Lady A. Well, if any two people's follies ever kept each other in countenance, certainly those of my caro-sposo and

myself, ought to do it; and happy should that couple consider themselves, where the little extravagancies of the wife make her look with good temper on the dissipation of her husband;—and, *vice versa*, when the consciousness of the husband makes him find an apology for the innocent gaities of his wife. It is but a round-about way, after all, of coming at the main point of matrimony,—a quiet life, oh Lord!

Mrs. S. A quiet life indeed! and do you think one would marry only for to have a quiet life? No, indeed! I've no notion of a quiet life—not I—my lady;—no more had your ladyship, till Mr. Mordent———

Lady A. Stop, stop, my good Sarsnet—Remember it is a wife's privilege to hear nobody abuse her husband but herself.

Mrs. S. Well, I won't abuse him, though my tongue itches to call him every bad name in the Roman calendar. But answer me one question, my lady; did you on a cold nipping night in November, order me to attend in my camblet cloak and slippers, to meet Mr. Mordent—only to lead a quiet life after all?

Lady A. Why (*hesitatingly*) I did expect something more, to be sure! but then, my good Sarsnet, those were our young days of romance and anticipation, when I lived only in the vision of my own fancy, and breathed but in the brilliant illusions of my own imagination. Then my mind was warm with the overcharged description of love and marriage, which I had found in the circulating library, and I pictured to myself a man at my feet for whole ages, without considering we might grow weary in the joints, from continuing in the same awkward posture—and that fashion had rendered conjugal attentions ridiculous.

Mrs. S. Fashion indeed! There it is—Mr. Mordent was never contented without you were shewing your person at the Opera, and at routs and balls, and wasn't your first quarrel upon that very point?

Lady A. It was indeed. (*feeling.*) I then expected in-

deed, perhaps foolishly, that we should find happiness in the performance of domestic duties—Heigho.

Mrs. S. There, now, I declare you scythe at the very recollection of his drumstick duties, as you call them.

Lady A. Sigh! no, I didn't sigh, did I? I'm sure I didn't intend it, (*aside*) [*deep feeling for a moment*] at least, I should have thought that my sighs have been stifled so long, that they had forgotten the passage from my heart to my lips; (*resuming her gaiety*) and why should *I* sigh! The leader of fashion, the envy of my friends, riches in my hand, and pleasures at my command—uncontrouled mistress of my own actions—what wish is there ungratified! Am I like Lady Spendthrift, obliged to render up a quarterly account of every little expenditure on my person and pleasures, and doomed to a monthly quarrel upon paltry pounds, shillings and pence;—or does my fate resemble that of Mrs. Homely, who never dare stir a foot from her own threshold, without telling the how—the why—and the wherefore to her jealous-pated husband? If my inclination led me to the farthest quarter of the globe, would Mr. Mordent's veto prevent my excursion?

Mrs. S. Oh, no, indeed: the farther the better, I dare say.

Lady A. Or, did the most extravagant caprice enter my imagination, would he prevent its gratification, by a—"you shan't do that," or "I won't permit this"—with a "my dear," at the end of it?

Mrs. S. No: I will say that for him, he never takes the trouble to contradict you, since he never appears in your sight. He's always with his companions.

Lady A. And am I not always with mine? If Mordent passes his nights out, do I not see company at home? If he takes his box of dice at Brookes's, have I not my box at the Opera? If the knock, which gains him admittance to his home, does not thunder at the door till three, do not I prevent the noise from disturbing my rest, by not returning till four?

Mrs. S. Well, there is some pleasure in being even with a husband, to be sure. But I don't know—I hate this yea and nay indifference. I'd had rather see you in a passion, and a quandary, and all that—and it would be better for you to meet every day, and quarrel every day, and make it up again every day, like other respectable married folks, than never meet at all.

Lady A. By the bye, did he give no reason for refusing to come to me?

Mrs. S. Reason forsooth! Husbands never have no reason. But they do say, that he has lost a sum of money at play, at Pharo, or sum'mut. I'm sure, I wish Pharo had been drown'd in the Red Sea, along with his namesake.

Lady A. His losses are nothing new—In gambling, as with matrimony, one must put up with Fortune, in all the variety of her moods.

Mrs. S. Aye, but they do say that he is obliged to borrow at a million per cent.

Lady A. Well, then he'll pay it, and it will be over. But what detained you so long on my message?

Mrs. S. Aye, ma'am, that's what I'm going to unclose to you; for I'm sure there be other bad doings. And seeing my master go into Mr. Item's room, I clapp'd my ear to the key hole, and there I heard a whuz-buz.

Lady A. What, turn eaves-dropper, Sarsnet; this was wrong.

Mrs. S. Oh, I dare for to say you think so, I'll be bound for it you never put your ear to your key hole. But when some people won't let other people know the rights of a thing, why, I don't see, for my part, why a key hole mayn't serves one's purpose to come at the truth. However, I could only catch up a word here and there—and the first was sum'mut about a child.

Lady A. A child! (*anxiety.*)

Mrs. S. And a mother, my lady; though, for the matter of that, where there is a child, one's own natural penetrality might tell one there was a mother.

Lady A. Well? (*anxiously, yet repressing curiosity.*) But, no—don't tell me—I'll not hear a single word more, and command you to be silent.

Mrs. S. Oh, very well, ma'am, I'll be silent—I won't tell you a word about Mr. Item's fathering the child.

Lady A. (*with hope and pleasure.*) Oh, then it was Mr. Item, after all?

Mrs. S. Oh, yes, ma'am, but that was all a flam. For my master, immediately after, exclaimed (*Lady A. listening anxiously*) but, I beg your pardon—I won't utter a single word more—as your ladyship desired.

Lady A. (*pettishly.*) What did your master exclaim?

Mrs. S. Why, my lady, he called somebody a poor injurious girl, and a prodigality of wit and beauty; and then I heard somebody's feet on the stairs, and was fain for to scamper.

Lady A. A child! an injured girl! and I not know of it. How my heart beats. (*a moment of feeling which she represses.*) Why, one would suppose that I was an affectionate wife, instead of the fashionable and nonchalante Lady Anne Mordent. (*to Mrs. S.*) Nonsense, child! you have been deceived.

Mrs. S. No, indeed; I had all my seven senses, and my eye-teeth about me—for you know, my lady, I love you in my heart and soul, and it is all for your own good, that I wish to prove my master the worst husband in the world, just to spur you up to treating him as he deserves.

Lady A. (*after a moment.*) No, no, I don't believe it, upon that point he wouldn't, he couldn't deceive me; if it were so, he knows my heart is not so ungenerous, but that he might have trusted me.

Mrs. S. Well, well, I'll rummage about, and find theparticlers,—shan't I, my lady?

Lady A. Why, if you can, by chance; but mind, without paying—no key-hole business—and then, if you can just learn,—merely—merely—whether you haven't mistaken the

whole matter. In short, I am so convinced that you are wrong, that you had better convince yourself so; for my own part, I am utterly careless about the matter. (*suddenly assuming deep feeling.*) For 'tis so long since I have reposed my happiness upon affection, that . . . . but, Lord bless me, I'm becoming sentimental,---and shall be too late for a thousand calls I must make this morning---so order the Vis-a-vis to the door, that---that, that---(*aside, feeling overpowering her as she is going out*)---that I may lose my recollection in a round of unmeaning visits. [*Exit.*

Mrs. S. She may say what she will, but I know very well she is the most miserablest lady alive, and I could tear his eyes out! Husband, indeed! And so, because I listened to the fellow's love, and nonsense-stuff, and took pity on him, when he was going to hang, or drown himself, he must think, as soon as he has got me safe, to be made my lord and master! I'd tell him another story!---My lord and master, truly! [*Exit.*

END OF ACT THE FIRST.

ACT II.

An Apartment at Mrs. Penfold's.

Lennox *and* Mrs. Penfold.

Len. But my good Mrs. Penfold, do tell me who this divine creature is.

Mrs. P. That's more, Mr. Lennox, than I can tell.

Len. But, how came she under your care?

Mrs. P. That's more than I dare tell: And, I can assure you, I shall get into a pretty scrape, if it was known, that you had even seen her.

Len. But that, you know, you could not help, since I caught a glimpse of her at the window; what is more, I have often seen, and often followed her, but could never before make out where she lived; little did I think she was a protegée of my good old nurse's.

Mrs. P. Yes, yes, your good old nurse might have waited long enough for a visit, if you had not seen a young girl at her window.

Len. Well, well, I am sorry you won't let me see her; you are right, I dare say. But I am wrong to neglect one, to whom I owe so much, as to my good nurse, Penfold; and I shall therefore redeem my character by visiting you much oftener than I have done.—(*Aside.*) Now to write to Mordent, that I have discovered my incognita, and make him assist me, in getting her into my power. He is under too many obligations to me to refuse—So farewell, Mrs. Penfold. [*Exit.*

Mrs. P. Ah, ah, master Lennox, your'e a sly one tho' I nursed you myself, and I fear my cousin Item would stand little chance by your side. But, what *can* have come to my old avaricious relation, who, till now, has ever made money his god. Here he commissions me to praise him to her, and

inspire her with favourable sentiments of him. There's some mystery in all this, which I cannot fathom. Ah! she comes.

Enter Joanna.

Well, my sweet Joanna—but why so melancholy? I left you, just now, all life and spirits.

Joanna. True, madam; nature has blest me with spirits to smile in the face of misfortune; yet, sometimes, the bitter remembrance, that I am disowned by my father,—that there is no hope that these lips will ever meet a parent's kiss, or this head receive a parent's blessing, will call a tear into my eye, and make my smiles appear traitors to the feelings of my heart.

Mrs. P. Come, come; forget such unpleasant thoughts; what should you care for one, who never cared for you?

Joanna. Ah, you have never known the want of a parent's smile: you were never abandoned; you knew your father. I never saw mine—do not even know his name. I had a strange desire to see him once, and I was denied. I am a high-spirited girl, but I would have kneeled to him, would have kissed his feet, and was refused. No matter—(*dashing her tears from her eyes*)—I know it is ungrateful to meet your kindness with tears—so thus I will dash them off, and try to resume my smiles.

Mrs. P. That's right, that's right! Be cheerful, since you are placed here by a person, who is very capable of making you independent of this father, who deserts you.

Joanna. There is only one way, madam, in which I wish to be independent, and that is, by the exertion of the talents nature has blest me with. It was the hope of this, which induced me to fly from the pittance my unkind father allowed me. The bread that was not sanctioned by his affection, I disdained to eat. But, come, set me to work, and you shall see, that the lark shall not carol his morning song more blithely than Joanna. (*A knocking at the door.*) Hark!—somebody is coming—I had better retire.

Mrs. P. Do so;—should it be the kind gentleman, who interests himself in your fate, I will call you. There, go, and wipe away the traces of your tears.

Joanna. I will, ma'am; you are very good, and I will do my best to repay your goodness with smiles. [*Exit.*

Mrs. P. I'm glad she's gone, for it may be that rake, Mr. Lennox, again; and if cousin Item were to find any body had seen her, he'd stop the paltry stipend he allows me, and so often taunts me with.—Ah! no—'tis Mr. Item himself.

Enter Item.

Well, cousin Item——

Item. Well, Mrs. Penfold—But since you receive the substantial benefit of our relationship, in the annuity which my kindness allows you, I must beg you will dispense with the nominal one of calling me cousin—Mr. Item, if you please. (*Aside.*) I hope the vulgar wretch hasn't told Joanna she's my cousin.

Mrs. P. Well, well, cousin—Mr. Item, I mean—I will mind for the future. (*Aside.*) A purse-proud fellow!

Item. Well, is Joanna secure—is she safe?

Mrs. P. Quite; and I have followed your directions in every particular.

Item. That's right:—then she has seen nobody, and is prepared to receive me as her sole protector?

Mrs. P. Protector! Lord bless me, I hope you don't mean any wickedness by the young creature.

Item. Wickedness, eh? He! he! he! What does the old fool mean? No, no—her legal protector. Have ye done as I bid you?

Mrs. P. Oh yes; believe me, my tongue has not been silent in your praises.

Item. Mrs. Penfold, you are a very sensible woman, and if you pursue my instructions implicitly in this business, the day that makes Joanna Mrs. Item, I will pay you a quarter's annuity in advance.

Mrs. P. Mrs. Item! So, so, I thought something was in the wind, by your eyes sparkling so.

Item. Do they sparkle? That's fortunate! there may be use for them. I say, we shan't make an unseemly couple, shall we? But I'm impatient—Fetch the girl—I must lose no time.

Mrs. P. (*Aside.*) No, you can't afford it, indeed.

Item. What's that you say, Mrs. Penfold?

Mrs. P. That time is too precious to be thrown away, cousin Item. [*Exit.*

Item. Mr. Item, if you please, Mrs. Penfold. 'Tis hard, indeed, while I submit to the caprices of those who patronize me, if I can't make those, whom I patronize, in their turn submit to mine. Well, now Joanna is in my power, and I am going to commit that which I have ever denominated a sov'reign folly, matrimony. But with me 'tis wisdom—'tis a union of interests—the climax to my success, ha! ha!—tisn't love and nonsense; and yet the idea that she's a fine girl, has given me a sensation here, that—that—my other sensations don't know what to make of. But suppose she should refuse me---Pshaw, I shall make it her interest to accept me, and that's enough; besides, she does not know that she is an heiress. Ah, ah, she's coming---A fine girl, indeed.

Enter Joanna.

Joanna. (*Curtseying.*) I attend your pleasure, sir.

Item. (*Aside.*) I'faith, if I look long, I shall forget the Berkshire estate, and the action of recovery into the bargain. Madam—miss, I mean—I---I—That is---Lord bless me, what's the matter? Pooh! pooh! Item, you are a fool! (*aside.*) You are welcome, my pretty lass; Mrs. Penfold has informed you of the interest I take in your welfare? eh! and how good I've been, and how good I intend to be to you ---eh?

Joanna. Mrs. Penfold has informed me of your goodness,

and I beg you to accept the warmest thanks of a grateful heart.

Item. (*Aside.*) I'faith, she's charming.

Joanna. But, sir, there is yet one favour that would out-do all the rest.

Item. A favour? What is it, my sweet girl?

Joanna. Tell me who is my father---Lead me to his feet---Let me once receive a parent's blessing.

Item. To your father! No, that is impossible. He has a wife who would spurn you. 'Twas his unkindness that first interested me in your favour. I tried to make him own, and receive you. And his harsh expressions of the trouble and expence you were to him, made me determine to render you independent of him.

Joanna. Trouble! Expence! Sir, you have indeed conferred an obligation on me. Mistaken parent! It was not thy fortune, but thy affections, Joanna coveted. But your goodness mentioned independence. There is but one way to win it—let me work—I will labour cheerfully.

Item. Work---labour. No, no, such hands as those were never intended to work. Such eyes as those are fit for other purposes, than following a needle through cambric muslin. Work indeed! ha! ha! ha!

Joanna. (*Aside.*) What can he mean? Surely the old gentleman is not in love with me.

Item. Come, my pretty Joanna, let us sit down a little, and talk over your affairs. (*They sit.*) I have a great deal to say to you, though, i'faith, when I look in thy pretty eyes, it seems all to run out of my head.

Joanna. (*With simplicity.*) You had better look the other way, then, sir.

Item. But I can't, I can't; they are the loadstone, and my heart is the needle. I dare swear, now, you have had plenty of lovers.

Joanna. Lovers, sir!

Item. Aye, young whipper-snappers, that did not know their own minds. But, be careful of them; they don't

know what they're at. There's no dependence upon them; no, no, you must look to those who are a little older, who are grown steady, and know what they are about. A man about my age, for instance.

Joanna. About your age, sir!

Item. Aye, my pretty Joanna; do you think you could love me?

Joanna. I could love every one who was kind to me.

Item. Every one? Lord bless me! that would not do at all. Aye, but do you think you could love me? Answer me that.

Joanna. If you were kind to me, yes.

Item. There's a good girl.

Joanna. I could love you, as a father.

Item. (*Starting.*) A father! Pshaw! I don't mean that. A father, indeed. But tell me now, Joanna, did you ever love any body in any other way?

Joanna. Oh, yes, one person, I love very much.

Item. One! I begin to be alarmed. Oh, a lady, I suppose.

Joanna. No, a man.

Item. A man!

Joanna. As kind-hearted a one as nature ever formed.

Item. And who was he, pray? How did you become acquainted with him? I understood you had never seen any body. What was his name?

Joanna. Old Mr. Winter.

Item. Winter! (*aside.*) Ha! ha! ha! There's not much fear of him; I began to be afraid though. (*Loud.*) And I dare say, the old lady you lived with, used to warn you against the arts of us men; used to say, we were gay deceivers, and meant nothing but wickedness, eh? and all that, eh?

Joanna. No, sir; I do not recollect ever being warned, except against the arts of one man, who, I was told, would ruin me, if he could.

Item. And who was he, my pretty Joanna? I have no

doubt, your warning was a right one. Who was this one man, who would have ruin'd you? A wicked dog, I'll be bound.

Joanna. It was one Mr. Item.

Item. (*Starts away.*) I---I---I---Item!

Joanna. I understand he has been the bane of my poor father, who has, for years, been deceived by him, till he has nearly robbed him of all his wealth. I heard, too, he had designs upon me. But you will protect me from him.

Item And who told you this?

Joanna. Winter, the faithful Winter.

Item. (*Aside.*) Curse him.

Joanna. You seem agitated. Surely, under your protection, I shall be safe from this bad man.

Item. Safe! Pooh, pooh! he shall trot back to the West Riding as barefoot as he came for this. You musn't believe this Winter, he's a fool; he has deceived you; 'tis he himself that would hurt you; (*aside*) I'll make the Yorkshire rascal pay for this: (*loud*) don't believe him, Joanna, you musn't believe him. (*aside*) I am too much in a passion to do any good with her now. There, my Joanna, go to your room. I will do every thing that is best for you.

Joanna. Thank ye, Sir. (*aside*) This is very strange; I do not understand it; but the more I look and hear of this old gentleman, the less I like him. [*Exit.*

Item. Warned against me, and by Winter too! But I won't be circumvented. Mrs. Penfold shall remove this bad impression. Her beauty has given a double incentive to interest, and force, or cunning shall accomplish all my schemes. (*going, returns.*) No, no, prudence---prudence. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

An Anti-chamber in the House of Mordent.

Enter Mordent *and* Cheveril.

Chev. Grumble no more, Guardy. Have done with prognosticating evil, 'tis all in vain: your gloomy reign is ended; fun, frolic, dash, and adventure begin—I am at liberty.

Mor. Yes—to play the fool!

Chev. I'm free—I'm alive—I'm beginning to exist!

Mor. Like a wretch at the stake, when the flames first reach him!

Chev. The whole world is before me, its pleasures are spread out, and I long to fall on; the golden apples of delight hang inviting me to pluck, eat, and—

Mor. Be poisoned!

Chev. Ha! ha! ha!

Mor. As your guardian, I—

Chev. Curse guardianship! I have been guarded too long—Years out of number have I been fed with lean Latin, crabbed Greek, and an abominable olio of the four faculties; served up with the jargon of Aristotle, the quirks of Thomas Aquinas,—my brain was a broker's shop; the little good furniture it contained, all hid by lumber.

Mor. Let me tell you, young Sir——

Chev. Not now, your day is gone.—I am on the wing to visit the regions of fruition and paradise; to banquet with the Gods, and sip Ambrosia from the lips of Venus and Hebe, the Hours, the Loves, and the Graces!

Mor. You are a lunatic!

Chev. No, I am just come to my senses; for I am just come to my estate, high health, high spirits, eight thousand a-year, and one-and-twenty!

Mor. Youth! riches! poor idiot!—Health too? What is man but a walking hospital?—You, boy, you, little as you suspect it, include within yourself a whole pharmacopœia of malady and mischief!

Chev. Zounds! he'll persuade me presently I am Pandora's box!

Mor. So you are!

Chev. Why, Guardy, you are mad.

Mor. True, or I should take the shortest way to get rid of misery, and instantly go hang myself, and quit a world where wretchedness walks at noon-day—where pleasure leads but to pain—and man lives but to prey upon his fellow.

Chev. What a picture!

Mor. Equal it in accuracy, if you can.

Chev. Why, I am but a young Artist; however, I can dash my brush at the canvas as daringly as you have done—so what think you (*rapturously*) of mirth, songs and smiles; youth, beauty, and kisses; friendship, liberty, and love; with a large capacious soul of benevolence, that can sooth the afflicted, succour the poor, heal the sick, instruct the ignorant, honour the wise, reform the bad, adore the good, and hug genius and virtue to the heart?

Mor. Every feature false!

Chev. Curse me, but I say the likeness is at least as good as yours, and I am sure the colouring is infinitely more delightful.

Enter Winter.

Winter. Ize ganging aboot the business of the poor Lass: so if ye happen to want me, I'ze be back in a blink.

Mor. Go where you will; so that you do not torment me.

Chev. Ha, Old Winter, my boy!—Don't you know that I'm of age? We'll make your old heart warm in spite of the frost on your brow—We'll have all spring, summer and sunshine—Won't we, old Winter. Why do you look so glum, old Honesty?

Winter. Old Honesty! Ecod, ye mistake the matter, young gentleman; I am an old go-between!

Chev. Ha! ha! ha!

Winter. Oh! you may laugh—but its varra true: and I begin to feel it---a helpless child has been cast upo' the wide wide warld, by a hairtless fayther, and I am a part o' the cause.

Mor. How dare ye, Sir?

Chev. A child deserted by the father?

Winter. Aye, ye may well shew the white of your eyes—but it's true for all that.

Chev. Is he poor? Is he pennyless?

Winter. Ecod, you've pratty nearly hit the mark---if Jonathan Winter baint cursedly mistaken.

Chev. Bring thy child to me, bring it to me, old rueful, I'll be it's father.—I never fathered a child in my life, I long to begin.

Winter. Why ye seem to ha' a little more human affection than some faythers.

Mor. Begone! leave us, Winter, as you value my favor.

Winter. Yes, I'll go where I tow'd ye; and if I doan't hear of her, ye'ze hear o'me! that's all. [*Exit.*

Chev. Bring me the baby, Winter! Zounds, how it would delight me to father all the fatherless children in the world! poor little dears!—I should have a plentiful brood!—And so, Guardian, I want money.

Mor. What, to purchase destruction wholesale?

Chev. I have five hundred good, wicked, spirited, famous projects on hand.—You have seventeen thousand pounds of mine, hard cash—I want it.

Mor. Seventeen thousand plagues!

Chev. Every farthing.

Mor. Your money, Sir, is locked up in mortgages.

Chev. Locked up? Oh, dam'me, I'll unlock it. I'll send honest Grime to ye; he carries a master key.

Mor. Have you no regard to my convenience?

Chev. I'll pay the premium; and if you want security,

you may have mine. I must have money! 'tis the source of frolic, pleasure, and notoriety. The world must see me, hear of me, talk of me! I'll be a patron, and a subscriber, and a collector, and an amateur, and a connoisseur, and a dilletanti! I'll hunt, I'll race, I'll dice; I'll grub, plant, plan, and improve! I'll buy a stud, sell a forest, build a palace, and pull down a church! I'll extirpate the dandies, extinguish the exquisites, and overturn the hobbies; I'll cut old fashions and invent new. The coats of the day shall be the Cheveril cut; the hats the Cheveril shape; Cheveril tilburies shall be all the go; and the name of Cheveril become the watchword of fashionable notoriety; the epithet that distinguishes elegance from vulgarity. That's the way to make use of eight thousand a year, my moody guardian. [*Exit.*

Mor. Mr. Cheveril!—He is flown—why aye, with spirits equally wild, wanton, and ignorant of evil, I began my career. I have now lived long enough to discover, that universal nature, is universal agony! O, this rejected Joanna! Miserable girl! Well! am not I miserable too? Who is not? The dangers to which she may be exposed! The cruelty of utterly abandoning her! Never shall I again be at peace with myself!

Lady Anne, *without.*

Lady A. (*without.*) Where is your master?

Mor. Hark! my wife? She tortures me by her gaiety while she stands on the brink of a precipice which she does not perceive, and by the extravagance which my folly has taught her. Her forbearance of reproach at my neglect too is insupportable. I must away, I can't endure to see her; while I feel that the next moment may plunge her in the pit I have dug for her. [*Exit.*

Enter Lady Anne.

Lady A. Mr. Mordent! So, so, he again avoids me,

upon my word, this moody lord of mine is abominably provoking. (*angrily.*) But no matter, he has taught me his own indifference, (*with feeling*) at least he shall teach it me. And I cannot, if we never have another conjugal tête-à-tête as long as we live. Yet why will he not let me enquire into the truth of reports, which one would suppose must concern his peace as well as my own; and why, I may ask myself, why and wherefore till Doomsday, without getting any answer, or being able to conjecture the truth. So I may as well pursue my own career of pleasure, and still drown all the recollection of my better feeling, and my early anticipating in the bustle and gaiety of society. Oh! Mordent, Mordent! why have you driven me to such resources?

Mrs. Sarsnet, *without.*

Mrs. S. (*without.*) I tell you, I can't stay!

Lady A. The stories, too, with which this kind, but officious creature torments me; and which her length of service gives her the privilege of telling me.

Enter Mrs. Sarsnet, (*hastily.*)

Mrs. S. I've got it, my lady! I've got it!

Lady A. And what, pray, have you got now? Some new report, or merely a repetition of the old one.

Mrs. S. Why, I'll tell your ladyship. A queer quandary kind of person brought my master a letter; which I knew was auspicious. So, ma'am, I watched him when he went for to read it, and then he put it in his coat pocket, ma'am. So my master's coat was all powder; over here. (*significantly.*) How he came by it, I don't know.

Lady A. Well, well, don't teaze me about it. What have I to do with your master's letters?

Mrs. S. So, my lady, he took it off, and ordered one of the fellows to give it a brush; so, making a pretence, I was close at his heels.

Lady A. At whose heels?

Mrs. S. The footman's, my lady. So, while he was brushing, he had a wranglation with the cook; and turned about to gabble footman's gibberish with she; so, I having a hawk's eye, twirled my hand behind me, so, and felt in the pocket; and there I found this written letter, which I slily slipped under my apron; so——

Lady A. Take a letter out of your master's pocket?

Mrs. S. Yes, my lady; and so being broke open, I read the contents, and found that it was from Mr. Lennox, ma'am, and all about master and a young girl. Oh! that Mr. Lennox leads my master into all kinds of mischief.

Lady A. A letter! a confirmation, perhaps---I shall betray myself. Give it me. Sarsnet, you have done wrong! To have robbed your master of his money, would have been less culpable than to steal from him the knowledge of transactions which he does not wish to avow.

Mrs. S. (*whimpering, and with tokens of great affection.*) It's very hard, because I can't bear your lady---ladyship's ill usage, and---and—and always feel as if my very stays were a bursting, to see your, your treatment, time after time---that I should get myself ill---ill—ill will, because I love you from the very bottom of my heart!

Lady A. You have indulged yourself in these liberties too often: you presume on the length of your service; and upon the familiarities I have so long found an apology for in your attachment; but I'll suffer it no longer.

Mrs. S. Very---very well, my lady! I'll be deaf, and dumb, and blind! and when I see you treated worser than a Belsavage, I'll burst twenty laces a-day before I'll speak a word!

Lady A. (*with great kindness.*) What you have done has been affectionately meant, and I am sorry to have given you pain.

Mrs. S. (*catching and kissing her hand.*) You are the tenderest, and best of ladies! and I know who is an unfeeling brute!

Lady A. I must rid myself of the letter as fast as I can, lest the temptation should be too great, and I verify the character of my sex, excite the anger of my Blue Beard, and become, like Fatima, the victim of my curiosity.

Mrs. S. Blue Beard, indeed!

Enter Lennox *and* Cheveril.

Len. Pray, Mrs. Sarsnet, is Mr. Mordent within?

Mrs. S. Indeed, Sir, I don't know! *(muttering.)* [*Exit.*

Len. I'll bet you a thousand, Cheveril, your charmer does not equal the girl I have this moment left.

Chev. Done, for ten thousand!

Len. You would lose!

Chev. You never beheld so peerless a beauty!

Len. How did you become acquainted with her?

Chev. We are not yet acquainted; (*sighs*) and I begin to fear we never shall be.

Len. Oh! oh!

Chev. I met her three times in the Green Park. The first moment I gazed at her with admiration; as soon as she was gone by.

Len. Gone by?

Chev. No; she's not gone by. But, good manners, you know, would not let me stare her in the face. Such a shape! Such elegance! The next time I determined to speak to her, and approached as resolutely as Hercules to the hydra.

Len. A good simile for a beauty!

Chev. I had studied a speech; but, somehow, there was such a sweet severity in her looks---I---I had not the power to utter a word.

Len. Courageous lover!

Chev. The third time, however, it being a little darker, for it was always in the evening, I was more undaunted: so, fully determined to throw myself at her feet, and declare my passion, up I marched, but as the devil would have it, she turned and looked me full in the face; and---and virtue---

and---and modesty, ever so awful---that my heart sunk within me!

Len. Ha! ha! ha!

Chev. It is now a fortnight since: and though I have walked the Green Park, morning, noon, and night, every day, I could never once again set eyes on her! Intolerable booby that I was, to lose three such precious opportunities——

Len. Of making love to a lady's maid!

Chev. A lady's maid! Damn it, sir, she's no maid—she's the lady herself, I'll be sworn! Oh! for one momentary glance, that might give vent to the passion that devours me!

Len. Ha! ha! ha!

Chev. What! you think I dare not?

Len. Ha! ha! ha! Look you, Cheveril, I know you: a lighted match, and the mouth of a cannon, could not cow you like the approach of a petticoat!

Chev. I! afraid of women? Dam'me, I don't understand having my character attacked, and traduced! Make a master Jackey of me? I am a wicked one!

Len. Ha! ha! wicked! You are as conscientious as a drunken methodist, or as a dying miser! You are not only afraid of the women, but of the sin!

Chev. Why, if---No, dam'me, 'tis not true! I have no more conscience than yourself.

Len. Me? I have a deal of conscience. Pleasure, I own, can tempt me: but I make no pretensions, like you, to sin for the sake of reputation.

Chev. Sir, I make no such pretension! I am, indeed, resolved to be a fellow of enterprise, pith, and soul; but not by vile, rascally methods. I'll love all the women, that's but natural—and perhaps trick some of the men, that's all fair! but not seduce wives, ruin daughters, and murder husbands and fathers. No, no, I don't go so far as that! No! if I cannot be wicked, without being criminal, why, I'll live and die an honest dull dog, and leave all my fortune to found a lying-in hospital for the benefit of the rising generation. [*Exit.*

Enter Mordent, *searching his pockets.*

Mor. Curse the letter---'tis gone!---careless booby! a thousand to one but it falls into the hands of Lady Anne; and the officious impertinence of her waiting woman will attribute the gallantry Lennox writes about, to me.

Enter Lady Anne.

Mor. (*retiring.*) Ah! she's here! I dare not be with her alone. I dare not confess my ruin to her, or stop the extravagant habits I have myself urged her to adopt.

Lady A. Mr. Mordent---Mr. Mordent---(*catching hold of his arm.*) Nay, nay, you shall give me a few moments now I have so fairly caught you. Why, one would swear that our matrimonial life at home was a game of hide and seek, (*with feeling*) only that all the seeking is on my side. And one would really suppose in our wanderings abroad, that we studied the map of London only to go different ways. However, since you run so much after us while we are your mistresses, it is but right that you should make us run after you when you are our masters.

Mor. Mirth, madam, is not in unison with my present feelings.

Lady A. Then I will be sad, and apostrophize dulness as poetically as Pope, without ever mentioning that it was in the company of my husband. (*curtseying.*)

Mor. (*aside.*) Can fashion have thus robbed her of her feeling! Your spirits and feelings, madam, are more conveniently subservient to my wishes than usual.

Lady A. Nay, nay, was there ever a time that Mordent could not make me what he pleased? He found me a simple-hearted maiden at eighteen; and made me a fond affectionate wife at twenty. He thought my manners too

rustic---my taste too domestic---my pursuits too confined---He enlarged my sphere of action—remodelled my disposition—taught me to seek society—and made the moral Lady Anne Oldcrest the dashing and fashionable Lady Anne Mordent. Is there any thing else I can do to oblige him?

Mor. Pshaw!

Lady A. You were displeased that I never went to parties. Now, there is not one to which Lady Anne Mordent's name does not give distinction in the fashionable corner of the Morning Post. You laughed at my disinclination for play. I have corrected my error, and can display as proper a spirit at the whist table as the highest titled of my competitors? If I am not fashionable enough for you, point out the pinnacle of notoriety you wish me to attain, and woman's wit and spirit shall reach it.

Mor. (*aside.*) Distraction! She hastens my ruin by complying with my foolish wishes. Madam, if you sought an interview only for the purpose——

Lady A. Why, if I did not seek it for the purpose, I am afraid you would prevent its happening by accident. So now, my good moody Lord, be civil and not captious, or I'll bring you on your knees in a moment. Look at this, traitor. (*shewing a letter playfully.*)

Mor. Ah, Lennox's letter! which you have doubtless read, and attributed the contents to me, and come to upbraid me with your suspicions.

Lady A. (*seriously and proudly*) You do me wrong. It fell into my hands by the reprehensible but unauthorized curiosity of my woman. I have flown to you with it unopened, as she gave it me. That I intended to have teazed you a little maliciously about it, I confess. Your reproaching me seriously with the baseness of having read it, and with an intention to upbraid and suspect you, has driven this childish idea from my wishes. There, Sir, is your letter, unread by me. However I may have lost your affections, I will still preserve your respect.

Mor. Affections! They are dead—swallowed up in the same vortex which has hurried me to perdition.——Why do ye not reproach me with neglect?

Lady A. (*with feeling.*) Because I am proud enough to bear it with indifference, if real, and silly enough to hope it arises only from the same source as my own—fashion, and not feeling. But come, confide once more in me.

Mor. (*aside*) Confide in her—tell her how poor I have made her—and repose upon that heart which I shall render wretched. (*Loud.*) No, no, it is impossible: I know and feel that your heart is reproaching me, though your lip may be silent:—that silence, my imagination, perhaps jaundiced, construes into insult. But beware, Lady Anne, how you expose me to your imperious family.

Lady A. I do not, indeed I do not.

Mor. Why then are these family consultations?

Lady A. They are contrary to my wish.

Mor. A separation, I hear, is the subject of them; and perhaps it is the best thing for both of us.

Lady A. (*piqued*) Oh, I have no doubt you think so; though, upon my word, no formal process of law can occasion a much greater separation than we *enjoy*—at present.

Mor. What would you say, if I declared my fortune to be lost, squandered, wrecked?

Lady A. Why perhaps in such a case I might exclaim, that as I had helped to squander it, I might help to redeem it; and that Mordent has it still in his power to make me an affectionate wife in poverty, as he has made me a fashionable one in his affluence. (*playfully.*) But I see you are only trying me, though I vow for the moment you made me feel seriously, and that I know to be quite out of your code for the conduct of the wife of the fashionable Mr. Mordent. So to redeem my character, and not lose my place in the Morning Post, I am off for my evening round of visits. I dine at Lady Linger's---drop in for Tramazzani's Aria at the Opera—play for half an hour at Lady Scarecrow's---squeeze through the Marchioness of Stifle-

friend's rout—dance a quadrille at Mrs. Somerset's, and sup at Lady Allnight's. So, my good moody lord, you now know (*sighs*) exactly where you may go without the unfashionable risk of encountering your wife. [*Exit.*

Mor. Ha, ha, ha! What are barbs, and stings, and poisoned arrows? Pitiful instruments! Thou, triumphant wretchedness, usest these but on small occasions; they want pungency! Hated, hated vice, what an angel hast thou lost me!

Enter Lennox.

Len. Have you got my letter?

Mor. Oh, yes, yes—I've got it, and my wife has had it.

Len. Your wife?

Mor. Yes, yes; but talk not of her; to think of her is distraction. What is it you want?

Len. I have discovered my charmer, and I want your assistance to——

Mor. Destroy her—Is it not so? When destruction is your object, you think, perhaps, you cannot apply to a better source.

Len. Destroy her? No, to make her happy; if I can at all judge from appearances, she is not so at present. I cannot get an interview with her: she is at my old nurse Penfold's whom I shrewdly suspect to be keeping her for some sly purpose of her own. But come, Mordent, where's the alacrity you promised, should I ever need your assistance? Do ye so soon forget——

Mor. That I am in your debt? Oh, no—no. You say she is lovely—perhaps innocent—

Len. For the first I answer; upon the latter score, one can never be certain. But come, man, shake off your scruples; you know me too well to suppose I should use any girl ill. So your advice and assistance I must have.

Mor. Advice! true; I too, fool that I am, knowing the impotence——

Enter Winter, *(in great agitation.)*

Wint. She is gone! she's gone! she is lost for ever!

Mor. (*aside to* Winter.) How now, herald of malice and mischief?

Wint. Oh, ye may talk and scold, but I can't forget her. Mayhap I shall never set eyes on her pratty face again.

Mor. Peace, I say!

Wint. Peace? How can you expect it—how can ye dare to hope for it? Oh, ye may call me names, an' you wull—Ize spake my mind—A father turn his back on his child!——But she left a message for ye.

Mor. (*anxiously.*) What message?

Wint. Tell him, if he woan't gie his child ane kiss—ane little blessing, that child will wark, starve, and die, ere she wull live like a parish pauper on scraps and alms;—tell him she has a prideful spirit, that doan't care to beg what she can't win; and if he scorn to acknowledge his daughter, why she scorns to accept his charity! That's her message to ye.—(*Going, returns*)—But I'll set the whole town ater her, but what I'll find her; and I'd make you look ater her yoursen, but that ye doan't know the face of your own child.

Len. How?

Wint. It be true as you stands there, maister Lennox; he never saw the face o' her, sin she were a foot long. But 'tis all very well—Nothing comes more surely to light, than that which is long hidden: an ill life, an ill end!

[*Exit.*

Mor. Wolves, tigers, serpents, were first created, and then man!

Len. You are truly a high fellow, Mordent; you spend your fortune, deceive your wife, and disown your child! That is, you inflict misery, and then tell us all you are miserable.

Mor. I act, and am acted upon: the precept and the proof go together.

Len. You are incorrigible: But come, we must about this business; my heart is deeply interested.

Mor. My affairs are at a crisis; and, if I augur rightly, it will soon be all over with me.

Len. Hope better; come with me.

Mor. With you—with any one! My own thoughts are hateful to me. Lead me where you will—Teach me to forget myself! [*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT THE SECOND.

ACT III.

SCENE I. *Enter* Mordent.

Mor. The crisis of my fate is come. I seem fairly hurled into the toils; and my pursuer is waiting to seize upon his prey. This cursed deed, which gives the power to ruin me beyond redemption, is ready for my signature. But the plunge must be made. It places at least some little time between me and destruction, and is my last resource. This poor deserted Joanna too preys upon my mind, and adds venom to the stings of my remorse. Forsake—as she is, she too may become the prey of some designing Lennox! And I have promised him assistance in his pursuit. Yet, if it be innocence he means to destroy, I will recal my promise. I will warn her of her danger. For in my own wreck, I will not pull down the happiness and innocence of another.

Enter Clement.

Clem. My uncle desires me to inform you, sir, that he has examined the deed, and it is ready for signing.

Mor. I am coming.

Clem. Had I but any influence with you, sir, I would entreat, I would conjure you, not to execute it, sir.

Mor. Why?

Clem. A sudden demand may be made by the first mortgagee; you may be unprovided for payment; equity of redemption will be forfeited; he will foreclose, and the estate will be his at a valuation made fifty years ago, less than half its present worth.

Mor. Ha! ha! ha! 'Twill become his incumbrance, as it has been mine.

Clem. Money-lenders neglect no advantage.

Mor. And as for conscience, or honour——

Clem. Some of them, I am afraid, sir, have very little of either.

Mor. 'Tis in the order of things. Your uncle, indeed, is a man of integrity; he knows them to be rogues, and warns me of them.

Clem. Sir, he---I---He may be a mistaken man, like others. I once again conjure you, sir, to re-consider the consequence. It is a very serious affair.

Mor. Mr. Clement, you are young: You cherish the fond hope of alleviating misery. Ah!

Clem. Sir, I---My situation is a painful one, but every feeling of honesty and duty compel me to inform you, that, when once you have signed this, you will be wholly in the grasp of mercenary men, who will pay no respect to former profits, the benefits they have received, or the feelings, and distresses of him, by whom they have acquired wealth, power, and pride. [*Exit.*

Mor. The nephew and the uncle, poor fools, have the misfortune to be honest. Grime, sly villain, is more cunning, and will not forfeit his hope of cutting evil short at the gallows The deed must be signed, for the money must be had. Yet these cautionings do but strengthen an aversion, which, in spite of necessity, I have always felt against this last act of despair.

Enter Item.

Item. (*Aside.*) What can detain him?

Mor. Mr. Item, you are right; this mortgage is a damned affair. Delay is dangerous; thought is vain; yet I am inclined to think again, before I sign.

Item. Think! Oh, by all means, sir; I like that; I approve that; act with your eyes open; take no rash step; 'tis what I always say, but mine is a thankless office. Like other officious fools, I can give counsel, but no help. I am

sorry to tell you, here is the upholsterer below, who is very insolent, and declares, if he be not paid immediately, he will have an execution in the house before night.

Mor. Scoundrel! Could not you put him off for a week?

Item. He has been put off too often.

Mor. Are there no means by which you could advance me that sum yourself?

Item. Oh, that I could; it would make me the happiest man on earth.

Mor. Affectionate soul!

Item. Riches would indeed be welcome.

Mor. (*Sensibility.*) Mr. Item, you make me as great a fool as yourself.

Item. As to the deed, I warn you again and again not to sign it.

Mor. Then I will not. Ruin and wretchedness are certain; but the mode of being wretched is in my own choice, and I will not.

Item. Yet what the devil I shall say to all your tradesmen, I don't know; they are every one of them as clamorous as the upholsterer. I don't believe one of them will wait two days.

Mor. Was ever man so pestered!

Item. Here too is a long account that I have just received from your groom at Newmarket; who says, he shall soon want even a wisp of hay. For my part, I have not a guinea in hand—I wish I had. Then, the impatience of Cheveril! And what the malignant damned world will say of the defalcation of a guardian, there is no foreseeing. Sign you must not.

Mor. At least, I will take an hour or two to think of it. Misfortune, disgrace, and approaching infamy, sit mocking at me, and I shall soon attain the acmé of misery. [*Exit.*

Item. (*Sneeringly.*) Ha! ha! ha! You won't sign. Indeed, moody master of mine! Ha! but I will send those about your ears that will presently make you. Now to see if Joanna is still safe. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

Enter Cheveril *and* Grime.

Chev. You must let me have the cash directly.

Grime. That is impossible.

Chev. I say you must. Impossible, indeed! I'm of age, young, rich, gay. I'll have nothing impossible.

Grime. (*Aside.*) What if I were to tell him of Joanna? 'Twould be a good joke to rob old Item of her, and he would pay well.

Chev. Twelve hours I have been free, and I hav'n't had a taste of pleasure yet. If I don't make haste, I shall grow old before I begin.

Grime. (*Aside.*) 'Tis a rare thought!

Chev. Why do you ruminate? Do you doubt me—doubt a man of eight thousand a year?

Grime. I say, Mr. Cheveril.

Chev. Well, what do you say?

Grime. Do you love innocence, youth, and beauty?

Chev. Love'em! 'Sdeath! an't I hunting them? An't I dying for them?

Grime. I know where they are to be found.

Chev. You!

Grime. The rarest creature!

Chev. Where? where? you old fox, where?

Grime. Such pure red and white!

Chev. Aye!

Grime. Such moist ripe ruddy lips!

Chev. 'Sdeath! don't drive me mad! Tell me where? Red and white—ripe and ruddy lips. But stop! I'll not be unfaithful to my angelic incognita of the Green Park.

Grime. She's a young untutored thing.

Chev. Untutored? Then, depend on it, I'll not be her instructor. She is not for me; I want to be a famous

wicked fellow, but not by ensnaring the helpless. No, dam'me! that isn't the true way!

Grime. Aye, but ensnared she will be, and by one old enough to be her grandfather.

Chev. No, curse me if she shall!

Grime. Why, what will you do?

Chev. Snatch her from such danger! provide for her—cherish her—love her—no, I can't love her—my Green Park beauty has got all my love!

Grime. Aye, now you say something!

Chev. Zounds! here have I been an age in the possession of eight thousand a year, and have not done one famous, good, wicked thing yet. It's a damned shame; isn't it, old Cent. per Cent.

Grime. You'll fall in love with her the moment you see her.

Chev. To be sure, I shall—no, I shan't—I'm in love already, and one can't fall into two pits at the same time.

Grime. There—there's her address. (*gives a card.*)

Chev. Her address! Mine will do the rest.

Grime. Mention my name, and they'll admit you.

Chev. (*reading.*) "Mrs. Penfold, Number"—'Sblood! why do I stand prating here? another day will be over, and I shan't get a taste. (*going.*)

Grime. 'Tis just by, and I'm telling you of a banquet.

Chev. To rescue youth and beauty from age and ugliness is indeed a banquet! So good bye, old Grime! Here goes. [*Exit.*

Grime. Ha! ha! I hope he'll out-rival Item; and if he should chance to marry her, I'll tell him she's legitimate, and shall have to bring the action of recovery for my reward. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

The Street.

Enter Cheveril.

Chev. This is the street; it must be somewhere hereabout. What a fatiguing affair pleasure-hunting is! Oh, that I could once more meet my lovely angel, my Green Park deity! But she seems as much lost as Rosamond's Pond! *(examines card)* This is the number.

Enter Item *from* Mrs. Penfold's *door*.

Ah! old Item! What, my old boy, you running after the girls too?

Item. Girls! what do you mean by girls, Mr. Cheveril? what brought you here?

Chev. The pursuit of pleasure, my old boy! of beauty—do you know where I can find it?

Item. I! how should I know, Mr. Cheveril? I have nothing to do with beauty: you know, business is my pursuit.

Chev. Oh! you sly old poacher! Grime tells me, there's a very pretty girl hereabouts.

Item. Grime! (*aside*) a prating rascal! Did Grime tell you so? (*alarmed*) Pooh! pooh! he was only quizzing you.

Chev. Quizzing! no, no. *(reconnoitering the house.)* Door shut—windows fast—all close as a country jail. How shall I get in?

Item. Eh! get into jail, easy enough; but I say, Mr. Cheveril.

Chev. Oh, for a harlequin's wand, that, with a slap, I might turn the house inside out, and see all its contents.

Item. Eh! what? he'll turn the house out of window. Oh lord!

Chev. Window! gad, my old boy, a good thought (*buttons up and prepares for a leap.*)

Item. Why, what are you going to do ?

Chev. Do, why, since the damned inhospitable door won't turn upon its hinges, and admit me ; I'll e'en make a morning call, by taking a flying leap through the window ; so here goes !

Item. (*aside.*) What shall I do ? (*stopping him*) but, I say, Mr. Cheveril---recollect---remember.

Chev. Eh ! why, what's the matter ? Egad, Item was coming out of the house ; he must be the old man ! Curse my foolish tongue, it had like to have spoiled all ! (*aside.*)

Item. (*anxiously.*) And did Grime say this beauty was to be found here ?

Chev. Here---no. Oh ! he didn't tell me where ; he only mentioned general terms---beauty and so forth—but 'twas only a joke !

Item. A joke ! Oh, only a joke ! ha ! ha ! ha ! (*anxiously*) But you are sure he didn't tell you where ?

Chev. Oh ! quite sure.

Item. (*anxiously.*) You're sure it was only a joke—ha ! ha !—you're quite sure ?

Chev. Oh, only a joke.

Joanna *throws up sash, and appears at window for a moment.*

What the devil was that ?

Item. (*alarmed, and turning Cheveril suddenly round.*) Oh, nothing !

Chev. Nothing. I am sure I saw a petticoat and a sash. (*looking.*)

Item. (*turns him round.*) Yes, a sash—a sash window. (*aside.*) I wish I could get him away. But I forgot ; your guardian wants you.

Chev. Then he must wait.

Item. But there's some money you must receive. (*Aside.*) If that doesn't entice him, nothing will.

Chev. That must wait too.

Item. But, you'd better go to Mr. Mordent's.

Chev. (*Aside.*) The old fellow suspects. (*loud.*) I can't.

Item. Why not?

Chev. This is my road—that's yours. I pursue pleasure —you business; you know they always lie different ways; so fly and prepare the cash; I'll be with you presently, and then hope never to see your face again till the money is spent, and I want more! [*Exit.*

Item. There he flies—the whirligig. Ah, he's out of sight, and all is safe. That cursed babbling tongue of Grime's had almost ruined me. Now to make Mordent sign the deed, and I'm safe. *Exit.*

SCENE IV.

Inside the House of Mrs. Penfold.

Enter Mrs. Penfold.

Mrs. P. (*calling.*) Betty!

Betty. (*without.*) Ma'am.

Mrs. P. Who is it, that bounced through the back window in such haste?

Enter Betty.

Betty. I don't know, ma'am: a young——hem! [*Exit.*

Enter Cheveril.

Chev. I am here, safe; I have twicked him.—Ah, my charmer, —— hum! Oh, your humble servant, Madam. Your name is ——

Mrs. P. Mrs. Penfold, at your service, Sir.

Chev Your acquaintance, honest Mr. Grime, informs me, you have a beautiful girl under your care.

Mrs. P. True, Sir; but I can permit her to see nobody without Mr. Item's leave.

Chev. Item! the cunning rogue! Oh, ma'am, I'm just come from old Item.

Mrs. P. Oh! if you have his permission——

Chev. Permission; Oh, yes—no!—that is—I won't lie! even to a woman, tho' I know 'tis the fashion. I haven't got the old boy's permission—I only want yours; and look here, I'll give you this for five minutes' conversation with her.

Mrs. P. Why, bless me, 'tis more than my whole year's annuity—but observe, Sir, it is only a short conversation.

Chev. Nothing more.

Mrs. P. No injury to Mr. Item?

Chev. Never fear.

Mrs. P. Well then, only for five minutes. [*Exit.*

Chev. Now courage, Cheveril, and don't let her imagine I'm one of your sheep-faced fellows. I don't fear any woman, except her in the Green Park. Now, if she be worth saving from this old fellow, and I could outwit him—I—Oh, I should establish my character for spirit, soul, and intrepidity for ever. I'll not be out of countenance. No, dam'me, I am determined, I'll speak—I'll speak, and to the purpose too. I'll be a damn'd forward, prating, impudent, wicked dog.

Enter Joanna.

(Cheveril *turns his back, and tries to assume courage.*)

Joanna. A gentleman to speak to me—perhaps he who has written to me, to warn me that I am not safe here, and who has sent me a disguise.

Chev. (*not daring to look at Joanna.*) Mrs. Penfold, Mrs. Penfold. I wish Mrs. Penfold was here! I should have felt bold enough, had she been present.

Joanna. It is very strange!

Chev. What does she say! (*listening.*) Ha—hem! Mrs. Penfold. Where the devil now is all my impudence flown.

Joanna. I hear from Mrs. Penfold, that you wish to speak to me, Sir?

Chev. Yes—no—yes. That is—If I could but turn round—one plunge, and it would be over. (*turns by degrees*) Ma—Heavens! (*Stands astonished*)

Joanna. (*aside.*) Mercy! it is he.

Chev. (*aside.*) The very beauty of the Green Park!

Joanna. (*sighs.*) I had almost hoped never to have seen him more.

Chev. (*aside.*) This is the luckiest—lucky? To find her here? Exposed to I know not what danger.

Joanna. (*aside.*) I have thought of him much too often!

Chev. A creature so divine! Looks of such conscious modesty!

Joanna. Sir!

Chev. Madam. (*aside.*) O, that I might touch her lips!

Joanna. Mrs. Penfold.

Chev. Mrs. Penfold—never mind Mrs. Penfold—'tis you alone I wish to see.

Joanna. Oh, Sir, pray don't detain me—I am sure it is wrong for me to see you.

Chev. Stop, madam. Pardon my presumption, but I—you—you have so much beauty and modesty—and merit—and—I am such a faultering, bashful booby, that if you leave me, I shall run mad!

Joanna. Mad, sir?

Chev. Upon my soul, I shall, madam, I can't help it; I never was so enchanted, enraptured, and ravished in all my life! And I am sorry to find you———

Joanna. Sorry to find me?

Chev. No, no, no, madam; glad to find you, infinitely glad; but not exposed as you are in this house.

Joanna. Exposed to what, Sir? Then, was it you, who wrote to me under the name of Lennox, this morning, and sent me a disguise?

Chev. Lennox! disguise! Is this his charmer then? Zounds! my sweet—I beg your pardon---but don't put it on---'tis another plot. I never speak ill of any body, but Lennox is a great villain; that is, where women are con-

cerned. Oh! I am so glad to see you. Why the devil didn't you come into the Green Park again? I got the rheumatism watching for you. I was frantic to think I had lost you.

Joanna. How so, Sir? we are not acquainted.

Chev. I am sorry for it, madam. B---b---but I hope we shall be. I have been a very bedlamite. I could neither eat, drink, nor sleep. I have dreamed of you every night; you have been in my head, in my heart, in my arms.

Joanna. Your arms, sir?

Chev. Oh, lord, no, madam, no, no---I---I---am talking in my sleep now. I mean---that is---I would not offend you, madam, no, not for ten thousand thrones. Though to find you here is the greatest torment; and if you would but leave this place---when there's a plan---a plot---a——

Joanna. I do not understand you, Sir.

Chev. Forgive me if I appear intruding; indeed my intention is good———

Mordent *without.*

Mor. I tell you, I will see her!

Chev. (*alarmed.*) 'Sdeath, I hear my guardian! (*Looking round.*) I must not be seen; but, for heaven's sake, let me speak to you once more! I'll hide here! Get rid of Guardy, and I'll pop out, and finish the conversation.

[*Retires into a closet, from which he occasionally looks.*

Joanna. But, Sir, what will Mrs. Penfold say? What will she think?

Enter Mr. Mordent.

Mor. (*surveys Joanna.*) Your humble servant, Madam. (*Aside.*) She is indeed beautiful!

Joanna. Sir! is it Mrs. Penfold that you want?

Mor. No, Madam—it is yourself!

Chev. (*From closet.*) Curse me, if I don't think old Item has placed her here for him.

Joanna. I have not the pleasure of knowing you, Sir.

Mor. That, Madam, is true; But you know a gentleman of the name of Lennox, Madam, do you not?

Joanna. Not personally, Sir, but I have received a letter signed by that name.

Mor. He has made proposals to you, has he not?

Joanna. Proposals! I do not understand you, Sir—He warned me of some threaten'd danger, but, I confess, his letter was a riddle to me.

Mor. (*aside.*) By heavens, she is an innocent! Nay, her countenance would half persuade me there are beings capable of happiness.

Chev. (*From closet.*) Zounds! he looks as if he too would fall in love with her.

Mor. Pardon my intrusion, Madam; I am a stranger to you, but—I am interested most warmly in your welfare! and since I have seen you, that interest has increased! Madam, you are in danger.

Joanna. You too warn me of danger! What is it, and who is it I am to fear?

Mor. Young, beautiful, innocent, and unprotected! you should ask, who is it you are not to fear? Are you yet to learn that youth, innocence, and beauty, are but so many incentives to the lawless Libertine! and that there are thousands ready to plot their destruction?

Chev. What the devil are they about?

Joanna. There is a tone, Sir, in your voice---that---I know not why---strikes directly to my heart!

Chev. The devil there is! She didn't say that of my voice.

Joanna. Point out to me my danger---teach me to avoid it ---I will confide in you.

Mor. Confide in none but yourself!---I have been almost lured into a plot for the destruction of your innocence, because I was led to believe that Innocence did not exist---

But I have seen you---am convinced, and will atone my error!---who, and what are you?

Joanna. I am nobody: the child of nobody: a branch lopped off, and cast away, that might have grown, but that could find no root---misfortune and an active spirit, struggling to shake off oppression, have quickened me a little---Other than this, I am but a simple girl; and my whole art is to note what I see, and to speak what I think.

Mor. Whoever you are, come but with me, and, while I have a morsel, a home, or a heart, you shall share them!

Chev. (*runs forward*) Dam'me, if she shall!

Mor. Why, Mr.——

Chev. She shall have my morsel, my home and my heart!

Mor. You in this house, Sir—with this Lady, Sir!

Chev. Nay, Sir—you in this house, Sir—with this Lady, Sir!—Madam, put no faith in him! He does not care a farthing for you,—I love you, heart, body, and soul! I'll offer you no wrong—Every proof that the most ardent, purest passion can give, feel, or imagine, shall be yours.

Joanna. For heaven's sake, gentlemen!---Oh, where is Mrs. Penfold? I must seek her, to prevent mischief.

[*Exit precipitately, calling* "Mrs. Penfold!"

Mor. (*Prevents* Cheveril *from passing*) How came I, Sir, to find you here?

Chev. Zounds Sir, how came I to find you here?

Enter Mrs. Penfold.

Mrs. P. What have you done, Sir? Ah! another gentleman! a little more, and you had frightened her into a fit.

Mor. Hark you, Mrs. Penfold! At your peril, keep her safe and free from insult 'till my return.

Chev. Insult! If I hear that old Item, or any body else insults her, I'll make a general massacre! Let any one take her away, speak to her, or even look at her, while I am gone, and I'll grind you all to powder. (*Goes, and hastily returns.*) Here, here's another bank-bill. I'll be back in five minutes; keep her safe, and I'll give you a thousand pounds! My

name is Cheveril--ten thousand! (*Returns.*) Cheveril, I say—my whole estate, my old girl. [*Exit.*

Mrs. P. But, sir, sir, Mr. Item will never forgive me. [*Exit.*

Re-enter Joanna *hastily.*

Joanna. Did I hear right? Am I then in the power of the man, against whom Winter has so often warned me? Every thing confirms it. I must escape--but how? Ah, the disguise sent me for a vile purpose, shall effect a good one. I will use it; return to the spot where Jonathan used to meet me in the Green Park; under his protection seek some humble retirement, and while an honest, though poor independence becomes the fruit of virtuous industry, I will pray for that father who exposed me unprotected and helpless to the vicissitudes of the world. [*Exit*

END OF THE THIRD ACT

ACT IV.

Item *enraged, and* Grime *determined.*

Grime. Once for all, Mr. Item, it will not do; so, be of a sweet temper.

Item. Why, you grumbling old blockhead, what would you have? May you not thank me for every shilling you are worth in the world?

Grime. Don't tell me, Mr. Item; I am but your scavenger, and you put me to a deal of dirty work.

Item. Here's ingratitude! Why, Mr. Grime!

Grime. Well, Mr. Item.

Item. Did I not first find you in Fullwood's Rents, where you were starving in rags and wretchedness? Answer that.

Grime. Well?

Item. Did I not take you to Monmouth Street, make you cast your beggar's skin, transform you into something almost human, hire you apartments in the Temple, and pass you on my master for a rich usurer, a damned rogue? Answer that again.

Grime. Very true; but you would not let me act my part. You took care to be the damned rogue yourself.

Item. Have I not trusted you, tutored you, taught you your trade, and furnished the tools?

Grime. What then?

Item. And do you pretend to bargain, wrangle, and prescribe terms to me?

Grime. Yes, I do.

Item. You do?

Grime. I do. Help yourself how you can.

Item. Here's a villain!

Grime. You trusted me, you know; you taught me my trade, and furnished the tools.

Item. You viper---sting the bosom that foster'd you.

Grime. I follow your own example; Mr. Mordent fostered you---There's morality in it.

Item. Oh, damn your morality.

Grime. Be of a sweet temper. Time was, I was your slave; you are now mine.

Item. Oh, the rascal---the infernal rascal!

Grime. I'm too deep in your secrets for you to dare discard me; so I'll have my share.

Item. Your——

Grime. Ay, my---my full share; so, be sweet tempered.

Item. And who is to find the money?

Grime. You.

Item. And who is to run the risk?

Grime. You.

Item. And who is to be prosecuted for usury and collusion?

Grime. Cast, perhaps, for perjury, whipped, imprisoned, and put in the pillory---You.

Item. And you to run away with half the profits?

Grime. Yes.

Item. Here's justice! Oh, what a damned world do we live in.

Grime. Your fortune is made; you must now help to make mine.

Enter Winter (*unperceived.*)

Item. Here's a villain!

Grime. You must, or I tell.

Item. What will you tell?

Grime. All---all the usurious tricks you have practised on Mordent; the arts by which you have cheated him of his estates, pretending that I am the man; your intention to foreclose; your neglect in not paying yourself interest, purposely to rob according to law; your plots to ruin Cheveril; all, all.

Item. You will tell all this?

Grime. I will.

Item. Why, you fiend! you superlative villain! you cut-throat!

Grime. (*Seeing Winter*) Hem! (*pause.*)

Item. (*Aside.*) Ah, the cursed spy! Ah, good Mr. Winter! Here is my old friend, Mr. Grime, has, has—— (*Aside to Grime.*) You see what your villany has done! (*Aloud.*) He is a good-natured soul, as you know,---(*Aside*) Scoundrel! And he---I--I---

Winter. Oh!—Yes—yes—I understand—ye needn't trouble yoursen to explain—ye'er a sweet nut, if ye war well crack't; I warrant ye.

Item. I, I, I was bantering him: trying to—(*Aside*) Villain!—But nothing can put him in a passion!—(*Aside*) Oh, curse you!—Nothing! Perhaps you want our good master, Mr. Winter.

Wint. Ecod, for once in your life ye'er right, Mr. Item—I do want him—and quickly too.

Item. He is gone out. Nothing but a joke, Mr. Winter; nothing else.

Wint. (*clenching his fist,*) Dam'me, how I should like to have one thump at 'en.

Item. Can I, can my dear friend, Mr. Grime,—(*aside*) Oh, you thief! do you any service?

Wint. Come---come--None 'o your hypocrisy 'wi me---'Twon't do, I tell ye.

Item. Can we oblige you any way in the world?

Wint. Yes.

Item. (*Fawning*) How? how?

Wint. Why, by taking compassion o' the bowels o' ye'er brother, Jack Ketch, and be ye'er own hangman! [*Exit.*

Item. There, villain! you see what you have done!

Grime. Is it my fault? I tell you again, you had better be sweet tempered. I shall say no more: you know my mind. (*Going.*)

Item. (*Aside.*) Oh, that I could poison him! (*aloud*) Mr. Grime! Mr. Grime! my dear Mr. Grime!

Grime. Well, Mr. Item?

Item. This quarrelling is very foolish.

Grime. Oh!

Item. We are necessary to each other.

Grime. I know it.

Item. Your hand, my dear Grime?

Grime. There.

Item. We are friends?

Grime. If you please.

Item. Well---well---(*aside*) Damn him! How I hate the dog! Concerning this Berkshire mortgage?

Grime. Ay?

Item. You shall have twenty per cent. on the premium.---(*Aside.*) I must quiet him.

Grime. That won't do!

Item. (*Aside.*) Unconscionable rascal! Thirty.

Grime. It won't do---half---the full half!

Item. (*Aside.*) Hell take him! Well, well, my dear Grime, the half be it.

Grime. Together with my moiety of the thousand given with Joanna, and the half of her fortune,---if, you know what.

Item. Your---Hem! (*sighs*) you shall; you shall. Are you satisfied?

Grime. On these conditions.

Item. Where is the deed?

Grime. In that bag.

Item. Mordent is coming. I know he will, for I know he shall, sign. But that is not all.

Grime. What more?

Item. This damn'd Yorkshireman will assuredly betray us to him; and Lady Anne's jointure prevents his being so entirely destitute, and powerless, as is necessary.

Grime. But, how is that to be helped?

Item. Oh, we must let her relations know his conduct. They will make her quit him. Hush! here he comes! I will give you my reasons and instructions when we are alone. Where is the deed?

Grime. Here, ready. Hem!

Enter Mr. Mordent.

Mor. (*Anger*) What is the meaning, Mr. Item, that I see the upholsterer, and two other ill-looking followers with him, below?

Item. Nay, why ask me? Why knit your brows at me? Can I coin?

Mor. Excuse me; I am a hunted bull, and butt at friends and foes.

Item. The insolent fellow insisted on taking possession; so, thinking you would not wish Lady Anne to know, I prevailed on him and the officers to remain in the hall, 'till I could speak to you. If I have done amiss, shew me in what.

Mor. No, no; I know your zeal. Why will you not advance two thousand pounds, for that and other immediate purposes, and delay signing, Mr. Grime? I ask only a day.

Item. Ay, Mr. Grime, why will you not? Pray do, Mr. Grime.

Grime. (*With gravity.*) Impossible!

Item. Don't tell me! Impossible indeed! You ought to consent; it is your duty: nay, you shall consent! Now do consent—recollect how much—

Grime. I cannot. Must have security.

Mor. Ha! ha! ha! Villain! Where is the deed?

Item. So, you will not, Mr. Grime? You will not?

Grime. I wish I could; but I am myself a borrower: the money is not my own.

Item. Hem!

Mor. Ha! ha! ha! Damn your rascally hypocrisy! Give me the pen.

Item. (*Holding his arm.*) Why, you will not sign, Sir! will you?

Mor. Peace, fool! Cannot you see a wretch on the wheel, but that your bones too must ache?

(Item *quitting him, he signs.*)

Item. Ah! it is always thus! I may advise, but my advice is never followed.

Mor. (*seals*) "I deliver this as my act and deed." Here,

implement of hell! I know your thirst, blood-hound! 'Tis ready-mixed destruction;—take, quaff, and burst! Begone.

Item. (*seizing the deed*) Come, sir; my good master has sufficient reason to be angry with you; it was very unfriendly, sir, to refuse. You teach Mr. Mordent what he has to expect. (*aside*) All is now secure.

[*Exit* Item *and* Grime.

Enter Winter, (*looking earnestly after them.*)

Wint. Ha' ye signed? ha' ye signed?

Mor. Ask no questions—Yes.

Wint. Then its all over. Well, well—Stark deed has no remeed, as the proverb says. Two wolves may well worry one sheep. I cam to tell ye, that ye'er smooth-tongued steward, and his companion Grime, are about two of the greatest scoundrels as ever walked on two legs—But 'tis no matter.

Mor. Pshaw, fool.

Wint. I tall ye, they are two damned villains. 'Tis nae six minutes agone, sin I heard all their terrifying gab.

Mor. Hear!

Wint. Yas, hear!

Mor. What did you hear?

Wint. Item himself confess that he had fleeced ye of ye'er estates; that Grime be nae mair but his jackall; that it is his intention to foreclose; that he has wilfully neglected to pay himsel interest, for that he may claw ye agreeably to law; that there ha' been sham deeds and shameful doings; and that a plot is laid to filch maister Cheveril of aw' his wealth.

Mor. (*convulsive laughter.*) Ha, ha, ha! You heard all this?

Wint. Aye, I did, wi' my own ears.

Mor. Ha, ha, ha! Item? Are you sure you heard this precious mischief?

Wint. When did Jonathan Winter tell you a lie?

Mor. Ha, ha, ha! Item? I am glad on't; 'tis right, 'tis

consistent, 'tis delightful: Ha, ha, ha! Abraham's rejected prayer: not one honest man: Ha, ha, ha!

Win. Come, come, fair and softly: not you, nor the black-clawed Lucifer himsen, can deny but that old Jonathan Winter is honest.

Mor. Item? Ha, ha, ha! And I, too---I thought him just and good. Oh, gull, gull, gull! Ha, ha, ha! (*Recollecting.*) Tell Mr. Clement I wish to speak with him.

Wint. But your child---Ha' ye heard nothing o' her?

Mor. My child---true; you recal another agonizing reflection: 'twas to this villain I trusted her.

Wint. To Item---to old Item? Then heaven have mercy on her, that's all.

Mor. Ah, I see at once---his horrid plan bursts upon me: he knew of her legitimacy; his gains were not secure while she lived. Away, send Clement to me.

Wint. Aye, noo the steed is stolen, ye wad lock the door.

[*Exit.*

Mor. (*Convulsed anguish.*) Oh, the sharp fang'd wolf: Ha, ha, ha!

Enter Lennox.

Len. Mordent, how now? How you look?

Mor. I am an ass, a most ineffable ass.

Len. What is the matter?

Mor. Ha, ha, ha! 'Tis proved upon me.

Len. Your mirth is of a strange kind.

Len. The man, whom I have trusted through life, ha, ha, ha!---he, whose rigid honesty, do you mark me---ha, ha, ha! honesty!

Len. Well?

Mor. Ha, ha, ha! whose honesty made me sometimes doubt the truth of the self-evident system of evil---ha, ha, ha! he's a rascal, a double-leagued hell dog!

Len. Your steward?

Mor. Item, a deep, damnable, thorough-paced villain! that can bully, cajole, and curse; fawn, flatter, and filch, ha, ha, ha!

Len. Be patient.

Mor. Oh, I am delighted, ha, ha, ha!

Len. Be calm: you knew yourself to be in the power of a villain, and 'tis little matter whether his name be Grime or Item.

Mor. How? Ha, ha, ha! In a world of rascality, are not two rascals better than one?

Len. Nay, but attend to me; I want your help instantly at Mrs. Penfold's.

Mor. (*pause*) Mrs. Penfold?

Len. Yes.

Mor. (*recollecting*) It must not be.

Len. Ahey! what's the freak now?

Mor. (*wildly*) You can have no help of mine.

Len. (*angry*) Indeed but I must.

Mor. (*earnest rapidity*) I would not commit an injury on that girl for worlds.

Len. (*anger increasing*) Why, what conscientious mummery is this? You neglect your own child, and pretend to interest yourself for a stranger.

Mor. If the stranger be an angel of light, a beneficent being, why not?

Len. Beneficent! What, in this system of evil?

Mor. An exception to the rule! a rare exception!

Len. Like Item?

Mor. Pshaw! Hell!

Len. And may not your deserted daughter be equally an angel?

Mor. (*wild terror.*) May she? If she should, I'll have no concern in the ruin of that girl.

Len. (*with suspicion and anger.*) Hark ye, Mordent—I suspect you are plotting.

Mor. I!—'Tis likely, indeed, at the moment that I have plunged into such a gulph, as that which now surrounds me, that I should be plotting about a girl.

Len. Well, well, it may be so; the maid of the house, who is in my interest, tells me, she has adopted the disguise I sent her. As to you, Mordent, if you refuse me the aid I have a right to expect at your hands, you must no longer

expect my forbearance. Ponder on it well, and meet me instantly where your presence may be serviceable to me. My heart is in the affair, and woe be to him, who stands an obstacle in my path to her possession. [*Exit.*

Mor. Ha, ha, ha! his forbearance—forbearance! well, well—no matter—friends and foes, assist him! Debt has made me his slave, and why should I stand a bulwark in the way of destruction? Why stretch forth my hand?—is there one for me to grasp at? None! I will assist him, and help to pull down the virtue that puts my own vice out of countenance. [*Exit.*

Scene changes.—Enter Winter.

Wint. Ecod, this poor lass runs in my head strangely; and my heart goes thump, thump, whenever I think on her, so that I can't rest ony where. 'Tis no use my asking old Item fairly and openly where he ha' put her, because he wouldn't tell; and it wouldn't be much more use my throttling him to get it out on him, because then he couldn't tell; but I'll watch him.

Enter Cheveril *(in great haste, searching.)*

Well, mon, what are ye looking a'ter?

Chev. My dear Winter, can you direct me where Mr. Item or Mr. Grime may be found?

Wint. I direct ye, to see such a pair o'scoondrels? I may as well tell ye how to catch plague, pestilence, and famine at once. I'm a hunting one on 'em mysel.

Chev. 'Sdeath! they are both dead, and buried, I believe; for they are neither here nor there, nor any where else. Can you tell me where I can borrow a few thousands?

Wint. Pray may I be so bold as to ask whether ye tak me for a thief, or a steward?

Chev. I shall go mad. Oh, Winter, I left the most angelic girl your eyes ever beheld, at a house hard by. She must be friendless and fatherless, exposed to the arts of villains.

Wint. (*eagerly.*) What's that ye say of faitherless angel.

Chev. I saw her first in the Green Park.

Wint. Green Park?

Chev. She is now at Mrs. Penfold's; a divine girl! a miracle!

Wint. What? How? a lass in the bloom of youth—a young creature.

Chev. Not twenty; yet, with the penetration, wit, and understanding of the seven sages!

Wint. (*agitated.*) The Green Park? Penfold's!

Chev. Hard by.

Wint. I know the place! I'll be a'rter her! If it should be! Quickly, old Jonathan, quickly. [*Exit hastily.*

Chev. What is the matter with the honest soul. I don't know what sum may be necessary, but I find I can do nothing without money. I must have enough too, for I must make sure. I'll place her in safety and splendour; she shall be my queen.

Enter Item.

Ah, my dear, dear Item! I am the luckiest fellow on earth; am in instant want of money.

Item. So am I. I have been in want of it all my life.

Chev. You must furnish me with ten thousand pounds.

Item. Ten thousand! Ah! I wish I could!

Chev. 'Sblood! don't stand wishing, but give me the money.

Item. If my friend Grime were but here——

Chev. 'Sdeath and the devil, give me the money! I shall lose her! She'll be gone! I'll make over the seventeen thousand, that is in Mordent's hands; I will by heaven! On the word and honour of a gentleman?

Item. The seventeen thousand?

Chev. I will.

Item. It is true, I have cash in hand; but not my own.

Chev. Zounds! never mind whose it is! Let me have it.

Item Why, if I could but manage the matter; I am a poor old man, and it would be a little lift.

Chev. Oh, damn your little lift.

Item. You are sure you you understand—the seventeen thousand—the whole seventeen!

Chev. I tell you, yes.

Item. The risk will be very great.

Chev. Do you doubt my word?

Item. No, no---but——

Chev. But what?

Item. Your hand-writing, on a stamp, would be a memorandum.

Chev. You shall have it. Write a receipt for seventeen thousand: I'll sign it.

[Item *searches out an account book, lays it down; then takes out another book, finds a stamp and writes.*

Item. Aye, this is the thing. You remember the risk? otherwise, it might be thought——

Chev. Give it me! I have no time for thinking.

Item. I must borrow to replace it.

Chev. Will you come away, and let me have the money? Come, come, man!--- 'Sdeath! will you dispatch?

Enter Clement.

Clem. Do you know where Mr. Mordent is, Sir?

Item. No, Sir.

[Cheveril *hurries* Item *off, who puts up his receipt in one book, and forgets the other that he laid down on the Table.*

Clem. Mr. Mordent has asked for me, and, unfortunately, I cannot find him,—I fear he has signed the mortgage. Oh this uncle! Never was situation so excruciating as mine. Must I cast off all ties of blood, become his accuser, and, as the world would call it, betray my benefactor? Beside, what have I to reveal? my fears, and my suspisions, unconnected facts, that can alarm, but not relieve, and who is it that I should thus impotently accuse? My own uncle! (*sees the book*) Ha! what have we here? as I live, his private account book! The very thing he has so carefully concealed from all inspection! What shall I do? deliver it to Mordent? what may be the consequences? Disgrace, infamy, and—Dreadful thought!—I must not be rash---Hark! he's here---I must consider well. [*Exit*

Enter Item *and* Cheveril. Item, *with his hair on end, frightened, runs up to the table, looks over it, under it, and every where.*

Chev. (*anxious to get him away.*) You see, there is no book there.

Item. (*with terror.*) I am certain I had it in my hand.

Chev. We have not quitted the room a minute---Nobody can have been here since.

Item. We left my nephew here.

Chev. Well, if he have it, 'tis safe enough.

Item. I don't know that! I don't know that? If I have lost it, I shall never sleep again.

Chev. Come away! You have it some where, locked up safe.

Item. No! I laid it down here; I am positive of it.

Chev. Nay, but you see that it is impossible! Come, come, (*Taking his arm*)

Item. If it be gone, I shall go mad.

Chev. Is it so valuable?

Item. (*still searching his pockets, the table, and the chamber.*) I would not lose it for all I am worth in the world!

Chev. Come, come (*elbowing him, but not rudely at first, to the door.*) what did it contain?

Item. My soul! my secrets!

Chev. Well, it certainly is not here. You must go. You shall go. I'll indemnify you.

Item. You can't.

Chev. I tell you I will. (*pushing him off.*) It is in your own room.

Item. I hope so! I hope so! (*turning back*) but my heart misgives me. O Lord, I am undone.

Chev. (*a push.*) Will you go?

Item. (*turning.*) I am wretched.

Chev. (*another push.*) You won't?

Item. (*turning.*) I am ruin'd.

Chev. (*again.*) Will you, or———

Item. (*turning.*) I'm lost---I'm dead—I'm——

Chev. (*again with more violence.*) Furies and fire, begone!

[*Exeunt.*

Enter Mordent.

Mor. (*calls.*) Mr. Cheveril! (*runs over to the door.*) Mr. Cheveril! Tis impossible to stop him; but no matter; he can be no farther interruption to Lennox, who says he is certain his schemes will succeed. Oh, fortune, fortune, How dost thou aid the plots of man, when destruction is his object. And I too have calmly permitted the ruin of an innocent; who, while I looked and listened to her, I would have lost my life to defend.

Enter Mrs. Sarsnet.

Mrs. S. My lady, Sir, desires to know if she may have the honour to see you.

Mor. What is the matter now? I thought your lady had gone to her parties.

Mrs. S. Oh, as to what's the matter, let my lady speak. But she'll go to no more parties, not she. It's all out. For, my lord, my lady's father, and the whole family have been with my lady, and they told her such things, and said such things, that all my lady's good spirits forsook her, and she swounded outright. Oh, if she would but have followed my supercilious advice---but 'tis too late now---all's over.

Mor. What is over?

Mrs. S. I have told my lady often and often, how a gentleman's proud spirit might be brought down; but she would never listen to my consultation before.

Mor. Before!

Mrs. S. For, said I, my lady, you would be as merry as a grig, without shamming to laugh, and be gay, if you would but pluck up a spirit to take the Earl's advice.

Mor. You said so?

Mrs. S. Yes, I did! I should be no woman, if I would not take part with my sect! So, we are all ready for moving; seeing as we are resolved. For, said I, if he should fall at my feet, and cry his eye out, I would not hear a word.

Mor. Indeed!

Mrs. S. Not but I have as tender a heart as another. But, then, I would sooner break his heart than my own.

Mor. What does this insolent gabble mean?

Mrs. S. Why, it means, that my lady is coming to take her leave; and then we shall begone; and then it will be seen who will have most cause to repent.

Mor. (*aside.*) Is it possible?

Mrs. S. I am sure, if I could have made folks happy, I would have done it with all my heart and soul. But the secret is out at last, and all is settled. Not but, for all I'm so glad, I can't say but I'm sorry in the main! for I'm sure some folks will be miserable enough; and though they richly deserve it, one can't help feeling for them in one's heart. And so, Sir, as perhaps I shall never see you no more, God bless you. [*Exit.*

Enter Lady Anne.

Lady A. I am driven upon an agonizing task, which a too painful sense of duty, and your want of confidence, only could oblige me to execute.

Mor. Proceed, madam; apologies for feeling, or for inflicting pain, are quite unnecessary.

Lady A. Would it were to be avoided. But you have left me no alternative. You have a daughter? I, it seems, have innocently been the cause, that she is disowned and abandoned Of this I cannot knowingly consent to be a moment guilty. Our separation is decided to be inevitable.

Mor. And you support your fate with patience.

Lady A. Patience; nay, nay, I do not deserve this reproach.

Mor. You deserve? Who shall dare insinuate it?

Lady A. At this moment when my heart again bursts from the bondage in which it has been enthralled, and plays the part it was wont to do with my affections, happy days and past endearments rush upon my mind with sensations unutterable. As I was, I first won your heart; had I remained what I was, time might have recalled it to my power. But I find too late that I have wreck'd my own peace at the moment that I might have restored yours.

Mor. (*Much moved.*) Madam, I—I—I request I may be tortured by any thing but your candour.

Lady A. The total absence of affection on your part, was sufficient to torture me, and to drive me to every method to seek relief. But, to be the cause of banishing a child from a father's arms and heart—to cast her an orphan on a tempestuous world. No—whatever my other mistakes may have been, of that no tongue shall accuse me.

Mor. Right—Let the guilt be all my own.

Lady A. And now, I have one last request to make; which I conjure you, by all our former affection, not to deny. The settlements which you made on me, in our early days of love, were ample. In the sincerity of affection, I vowed, if ever they should be necessary to your happiness, that moment they should again be yours.

Mor. (*Greatly agitated.*) Madam?

Lady A. Nay, nay, I will not be refused. All the first years of our union my commands were obeyed; once more, and once only, I exert the prerogative your affection then gave me. The deeds are now in Mr. Clement's possession; he will restore them to you.

Mor. (*Indignantly.*) Never.

Lady A. Stop. Beware of rashness! You are a father, and have a father's sacred duties to fulfil. Take home your daughter; make her what amends you can for the desertion of a parent's love—derive delight from her innocent lips—let it sometimes remind you of those which once smiled upon you with such fervent affection.

Mor. 'Tis too much! Scorpions could not sting like this.

Lady A. Money is a poor vehicle for the affections of the soul, a contemptible token of the love I have borne you. But, such as it is, for that love's sake, give it welcome. A cold adieu I cannot take, it freezes my very heart. From my soul, I ever loved, and ever shall love. Had I a heaven of happiness to bestow, would you but deign to accept it from me, it should be yours. [*Exit.*

Mor. Why, so, so, so. It rages, it bursts, it is complete! Let fate or fiends increase the misery, if they can.

Enter Winter.

Wint. Its past, its all over---my fears and forebodings are fulfilled. I hae foond her—I hae foond her, I tell ye.

Mor. Have you? where?

Wint. Now indeed, Jonathan Winter is a rascally go-between. (*Horror.*) But what are you?

Mor. You say you have found her?

Wint. She is gŏne---she is ruined! Ye're a wratch; the most miserable o'wratches.

Mor. Tormenting dæmon! What? Who? Where have you been?

Wint. To Mrs. Penfold's.

Mor. (*Seized with terror.*) Penfold's! What do you say?

Wint. I was too late. A maister scoondrel, e'en as wicked as her own feyther, had decoyed her into his domn'd net.

Mor. (*Phrenzy.*) Decoyed?

Wint. Lennox, ye'er friend, ye'er crony.

Mor. (*Horror.*) From Mrs. Penfold's?

Wint. Hav'n't I toud ye?

Mor. Lennox---Joanna?

Wint. Yes; Lennox---Joanna. Let it ring in your ears. Joanna, ye'er child; ye'er guileless Joanna. He sent her a disguise---She ha' put it on—and the maid do say, ha' gon' off with Lennox.

Mor. (*Distractedly.*) Misery of hell! And was that Joanna? That my child?

Wint. Celestial creature! And I the pit-digger. (*Pause—despair.*)

Wint. (*Alarmed at the agony of Mordent.*) Sir, sir, maister!

Mor. (*Starting.*) I almost the pander! Imagination paints her, shrieking on the bed of infamy, and chains her in the arms of lust—and I, her father, knew it, stood calmly by, and did not prevent it! (*Pause of fixed horror.*)

Wint. Maister, dear maister—Maister Mordent! Dear maister Mordent! Speak! Ize forgi' ye—Why, maister—Ize pray for ye—Ize die for ye—Ize forgi' ye.

Mor. (*Starting from a profound trance of despondency.*) Fly, summon the servants. Arm yourselves—follow me!

Wint. (*Confusedly.*) William! Sandy! Jock! [*Exit, calling.*

END OF ACT THE FOURTH.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Green Park.—(Twilight.)*

Enter Mordent *and* Lennox.

Mor. Tell me, and tell me instantly, where you have lodged Joanna?

Len. Nay, Sir—where have you lodged Joanna?

Mor. Mr. Lennox, I will not be trifled with—Where is she?

Len. Nor will I be trifled with! I have discovered you, Mr. Mordent—I have heard of your visit to Mrs. Penfold—of that old villain, Item's part in the affair—in short, of your whole contrivance.

Mor. This will not serve, Sir; it is all evasion.

Len. Ay, Sir, it is evasion! cunning, base, damned evasion! and I affirm she is in your possession.

Mor. Mr. Lennox, I am at this moment a determined and desperate man, and must be answered—Where is she?

Len. Sir, I am as determined and desperate as yourself, and I say, where is she? For you alone can tell.

Mor. 'Tis false.

Len. False!

Mor. Aye, false!

Len. (*Going up to him.*) He is the falsest of the false, that dares whisper such a word.

Mor. Hark you, Sir, I understand your meaning, and came purposely provided. (*Draws a pair of pistols.*)—Take your choice. They are loaded.

Len. Oh, with all my heart! (*presents at some distance*). Come, Sir.

Mor. (*approaching sternly.*) Nigher!

Len. (*approaching desperately.*) As nigh as you please.

Mor. (*Short pause.*) Why don't you fire?

Len. Why do you turn your weapon out of the line? *(drops his arm—Pause.)* I see your intention, Mr. Mordent, you are tired of life, and want me to murder you.—Damn it, man, that is not treating your friend like a friend—kill me if you will, but don't make me your assassin.

(Pause—both greatly affected.)

Mor. *(Tenderly.)* Nay, kill me, or tell me where you have lodged the wretched girl!

Len. *(with great energy.)* Fiends seize me, if I have lodged her any where, or know what is become of her!

Mor. Your behaviour tells me you are sincere; and to convince you at once that I am no less so, know she is my daughter!

Len. Your daughter!—murder my friend, and seduce his daughter!

Mor. *(deeply affected.)* We are sad fellows!—*(They pause, and gradually recover from the deep passion with which they were mutually seized.)* Again and again, 'tis a vile world!

Len. *(Eagerly.)* I'll seek it through with you, to find her.—Forgive me!

Mor. *(Taking his hand.)* Would I could forgive myself!

Len. *(with animation.)* But it seems then she has escaped, and is perhaps in safety.

Mor. Oh, that she were!—Winter used to meet her here, in the Green Park, about this time of the evening. *(Listens.)* I hear the sound of feet. *(Looks.)* 'Tis not a woman.—Let us retire among the trees, and keep on the watch.

While they are seen retiring,

Enter Cheveril.

Chev. *(Looking round with great anxiety.)* She is not

here! She is gone! for ever gone!—I shall never more set eyes on her!—I'll fire that infernal house—I'll fire London—I'll pistol Lennox!—I may perambulate here till doomsday, and to no purpose. She would have been here had she been free.—Aye, aye, she is in thraldom: perhaps in the very gripe of vice. Furies! Lennox is a liar!—I'll cut his throat!—I'll hack him piece-meal!—I'll have her, or I'll have his heart!

Enter Joanna, *in Men's clothes.*

(Cheveril seen walking among the Trees.)

Joanna. Whither shall I fly? Where shall I hide? How fly the pursuits of wicked men? I have neither house, home, nor friend on earth; and the fortitude that can patiently endure is my only resource! What then? have I not escaped from those snares which vice had spread for me? Oh, happiness! I have! I have! And rather than venture in them again, welcome hunger, welcome cold, welcome the bare ground, the biting air, and the society of brute beasts!

Chev. (Advancing.) What can that youth want?—Who is he watching here? *(Walking round Joanna.)*

Joanna. As I live, the young gentleman I saw this morning! what reason can he have for being in this place?

Chev. He eyes me with curiosity.

Joanna. His intentions seemed good.

Chev. Who can say, he may know her? He is a smart, handsome, dapper fellow: I don't like him.

Joanna. I am not now confined by walls and bolts—there can be no danger.—I'll speak—Pray, Sir——

Chev. (*abruptly.*) Well, Sir?

Joanna. Have you seen a young person ——?

Chev. A Lady? (*Eagerly.*)

Joanna. Yes.

Chev. (*rapidly.*) With blue eyes, auburn hair, aquiline

nose, ivory teeth, carnation lips, ravishing mouth, enchanting neck, a form divine, and an angel face?

Joanna. Have you seen her?

Chev. Are you acquainted with that lady?

Joanna. I am acquainted with a lady, but not an angel.

Chev. Ah! then 'tis not her. (*Jealous.*) Perhaps you are her—her lover?

Joanna. Humph!—I—I love her.

Chev. You do! (*aside*) I'll be the death of him!—and she loves you?

Joanna. Why, yes.

Chev. (*aside.*) I'll put an end to him!—Are you married?

Joanna. No.

Chev. You—you mean to marry her?

Joanna. No.

Chev. Is she then lost to virtue?

Joanna. Who dare suppose it?

Chev. Ay, who dare? I'll cut the villain's throat that dares!

Joanna. She has endured insult, constraint, and violence; but not guilt.

Chev. Guilt? No, not wilful guilt: impossible! but then—Is she safe? Is she safe?

Joanna. Disowned by her family, exposed to the snares of vice, houseless, hopeless, friendless, not daring to approach the wicked haunts of men, she wanders forlorn and desolate, willing to suffer, disdaining to complain.

Chev. Tell me where!—I will rescue, defend, protect, cherish, love, adore, and die for her!

Joanna. Is your heart pure?—have you no selfish, dishonest purposes?

Chev. How came you to imagine, Sir, that I, or any

other man, durst couple her and dishonesty, even in a thought?

Joanna. Meet me here to-morrow at ten.

Chev. You!

Joanna. You shall see her.

Chev. See her! shall I?

Joanna. You shall.

Chev. My dear friend! (*Catches her in his arms.*) I'll make your fortune!—At nine?

Joanna. Ten.

Chev. Could I not see her to-night?

Joanna. To-morrow Joanna will meet you!

Chev. Joanna! Is that her dear name!

Joanna. It is.

Chev. Delightful sound!—The sweet Joanna!—The divine Joanna!—My heart's best blood is not so precious as Joanna!

Joanna. But, pray where do you live?

Chev. Joanna!—In Portland Place!

Joanna. Your name?

Chev. Joanna!—Cheveril; Hans Cheveril.—Joanna! Be sure you don't forget.

Joanna. I'll be punctual.

(Mordent *appearing among the trees.*)

Who's here? (*glides behind.*)

Chev. Joanna! At eight, did you say! Where is he gone!—Sir, Sir! [*Runs off seeking.*]

Mor. I heard the name repeated! (*aloud.*) Who is it here that knows Joanna?

Joanna. (*Appearing.*) I do.

Mor. Sir, do you? Well, and what? Where? Is she safe?

Joanna. I hope so.

Mor. But where, Sir? where?

Joanna. (*Aside.*) 'Tis Mr. Cheveril's guardian. (*aloud.*) Why do you enquire?

Mor. For Heaven's sake, Sir, do not torment me by delay, but tell me where she is.

Joanna. I must not.

Mor. (*Seizing her arm.*) But, Sir, I say you must, and shall!

Joanna (*Firmly.*) Sir, you mistake, if you suppose menaces can prevail.

Mor. Excuse me, I would give my right hand to know what it appears you can tell.

Joanna. I can tell nothing, till I am first made acquainted with your true motives.

Mor. And will you inform me then?

Joanna. Provided I am certain of their purity.

Mor. Know, then, that I pant for a sight of her once more, to do her the little justice that is yet in my power. Know, the wrongs she has received from me are irreparable, vile, such as could not have happened, but in this worst of worlds! Know, that I, her natural guardian, have been her actual persecutor; that I drove her into the danger of infamy; that I almost became the agent of her ruin, and that when I knew the engines of darkness and hell were at work to insure her everlasting wretchedness, I then discovered (*with horror*) that she was my daughter!

Joanna. Sir!—your daughter!—you? you her father? you my father!

Mor. Yes, I.

Joanna. (*Falling at his feet, and snatching his hand.* My father!

Mor. Can it be? my child! my Joanna! (*Eagerly raising and regarding her again.*) It is! it is!—(*Falling on her neck.*)

Joanna. My father!

Mor. My child, and innocent?

Joanna. As your own wishes; or the word father, should never have escaped my lips. This dress was the disguise conveyed to me, by which I effected my escape —I can suffer any thing but dishonour.

Mor. A father? Oh, I do not deserve thee!— I do not deserve thee!—(*Gazing rapturously.*) Once again let me fold thee to my heart!

Lennox. (*without, at a distance.*) Zounds, Sir!

Chev. (*without.*) I insist, Sir!

Joanna. I hear voices! [*They retire.*

Enter Cheveril *and* Lennox.

Chev. Oh! for swords, daggers, pistols, blunderbusses, and four and twenty pounders.

Mor. (*To Joanna.*) This way!

[*Exeunt Mordent and Joanna.*

Len. Confound your impertinent freaks: they have stopped my mouth this half hour. I would have told you all I knew instantly, but for your insulting passion.

Chev. Did not you say, you would not tell me where she is?

Len. I said, I could not.

Chev. Why, there now!

Len. But I suspect I can tell more at present, if you will but hear.

Chev. 'Sdeath, then, why don't you? speak! why don't you, speak?

Len. Will you be silent? I had a glimpse of Mordent this moment, in conversation with a youth.

Chev. Well!

Len. It was the identical dress I sent as a disguise to Joanna.

Chev. How!

Len. And I suspect that very youth to be Joanna herself.

Chev. (*Recollecting.*) Eh! how! By heaven, and so it is! (*anger and fear.*) In the possession of Mordent?

Len. Be patient—there is a secret—his claims supersede all others.

Chev. His claims! By every power of heaven and hell——

Len. (*catching his arm.*) Be patient, I tell you; she is his daughter!

Chev. (*momentary pause.*) Joanna? my sweet Joanna his daughter?

Len. Even so.

Chev. His daughter? hurrah! my dear Lennox! (*Hugs him in his arms.*) Hurrah! (*In ecstacy.*) Oh, Lord! Oh, Lord! Hurrah! his daughter! Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!

Exeunt.

SCENE II.

The House of Mordent.

Enter Clement *and* Mrs. Sarsnet.

Clem. Are you sure it was Mr. Mordent?

Mrs. S. I tell you, Sir, I was on the watch, and opened the door myself. "Take care, my dear," said he to the sham gentleman-lady, and handed her in lovingly!—The monster! My Lady is bewitched! She is fabricated! She is trivetted to the house. I am sure he must have nailed an invisible horse-shoe to the threshold.

Clem. But how do you know this pretended youth to be a woman?

Mrs. S. Did not I hear? I held the candle full flare in her face; it was a perfect pictaer! I never saw the

like. So she is to be brought home, truly! Such magnanimous impudence! But I'll go to my Lady.

Clem. Be cautious; you may do mischief.

Mrs. S. I don't care; I am resolved to stabilitate and confound facts. So, then, having a sufficient dearth of proofs, we shall sail off in the charut, and be properly received by the Earl, the Viscount, and the Bishop; and be isquired into the hall; and be kissed for joy; and shall swim up stairs into the bosom of the family. [*Exit.*

Enter Cheveril, *hastily.*

Chev. Dear Clement, have you seen Mr. Mordent?

Clem. No: I am in search of him, on affairs of the utmost importance.

Chev. So am I.

Clem. No less than the recovery or total loss of his mortgaged lands.

Chev. Lands! Damn the filthy acres. Have you seen my Joanna?

Clem. I am in great need of advice, and should be glad to consult you.

Chev. Consult! 'sdeath, man, I am in a hurry: I cannot rest till I have found Mordent.

Clem. Nay, but on the decision of this moment his ruin or safety depends.

Chev. Indeed! if so, my impatience must wait.—What is it?

Clem. I hear footsteps. This way. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Mordent *and* Joanna.

Mor. My dear girl, your rare endowments surpasss my hopes; and convinced as I am that beauty is destructive, and wisdom impotent, I joy to find you thus adorned.

Joanna. Wait to know me better, I fear you would prize me above my worth.

Mor. How shall I reward it? Fool that I am! madman that I have been!

Joanna. (*rapturously kissing his hand.*) This is my rich reward!

Mor. I have told you in part my desperate situation. If Grime would but give honest evidence. But of that there is little hope.

Joanna. My greatest fear arises from what you have said of Lady Anne.—I must not, will not be the cause of separation.

Mor. Let me do her justice; her errors have been of my own creation; I have spurned at the kindness I did not deserve. Her forbearance at my conduct has been my astonishment and my torture.

Joanna. Oh, that I could see you reconciled!—Oh, that I could gain the love of such a lady!

Mor. Of that, sweet girl, you are certain. Lennox is with her, and by this, she knows your story; and I am sure, adores your virtue.

[*Lady Anne without.*

Lady A. Where is she?

Mor. I hear her!

Enter Lady Anne.

Lady A. Oh, noble girl! (*Runs and embraces Joanna.*) Forgive this rude tumult of affection, which I cannot restrain.

Joanna. Is it possible?

Lady A Mr. Mordent, with such a child as this restored to your arms, and thus restored to yourself, you are a millionfold more dear to me than ever.

Mor. I cannot bear it!

Lady A. Will you be my daughter too?—Dare ye own me for a mother, and find in my heart the affection of that one you have lost—Will you?

Joanna. Adversity I could endure, but this unhoped-for tide of blessings overpowers me.

Mor. Oh, how I hate myself!

Lady A. No, no, 'tis not yourself you hate—'tis that life which never emanated from yourself. Be but the Mordent who first won my love—exert but the energies and feelings of your own heart, and you will find the power to be great and good.

Mor. To be a—— I dare not think.

Lady A. Indeed you are wrong.—Had I not been guilty of a thousand errors, you never would have had occasion for this self-reproach. Like cowards, we both have shunned inquiry. Let us be more courageous; let us affectionately communicate our mutual mistakes; and, while we examine, we shall correct the mind, expand the heart, and render ourselves dear to each other, and beneficent to the whole world.

Mor. Well, well, I will endure existence a little longer, if it be but to hate myself.

Enter Cheveril, (*flying to Joanna*).

Chev. My life! my soul! my precious Joanna!

Mor. They will persuade me presently that happiness is possible.—You have cause, child, to thank Mr. Cheveril.

Joanna. Oh, yes! he has a heart of the noblest stamp.

Mor. Ay, every body's right! All angels except myself: I am cast into the shade; a kind of demon, grinning in the dark.

Chev. Come, come, guardian, dismiss these sombre

reflections; they have plagued you long enough.—Clement is in eager search of you, to communicate secrets of the utmost importance concerning his uncle Item.

Mor. The villain!

Chev. Yes; I hear him, he is below, half distracted, foaming with rage, and accusing every servant in the house with having stolen his Book.—Pray, keep back, my sweet Joanna, but for a moment! And we may perhaps, have evidence from his own lips.

Exeunt.

Enter Item.

Item (*Looking about eagerly.*) 'Tis gone! 'tis lost! I am undone! I am murdered! am betrayed! I shall be prosecuted, pilloried, fined, cast in damages, obliged to pay all, to refund all, to relinquish all!—all—all—all! I'll hang myself! I'll drown myself!—I'll cut my throat!—Mordent has got it! All my secrets, all my projects, all my rogueries, past, present, and to come! Oh, that I had never been born! Oh! that———

Enter Clement.

(*Runs up to him.*) Have you seen my book? Give it to me! where's my book?

Clem. What book?

Item. My account book! my secrets—myself! my soul! my heart's blood; (*Seizes Clement's coat-lap and searches*) I have it—tis here—I feel it!

Clem. (*Defending himself.*) Yes, Sir, 'tis here—Be pacified!

Item. (*Assaulting him.*) I wont! I wont! I'll have it! Give it me!—I'll swear a robbery! I'll have you hanged!

Clem. (*Takes a Book, sealed up, out of his pocket.*)—

This book, Sir, I consider as a sacred trust; and part with it to you I must not!

Item. You shall part with it, villain! You shall! I'll have your soul!—'tis mine!—I'll have your heart!—'tis mine!—I will have it! I will have it! I will have it!

[*Violently assaulting him.*]

Clem. You shall have my heart, life, and soul first!

Item. (*Falls on his knees.*) My dear nephew! my good boy! my kind Clement! I'll supply all your wants!—I'll pay all your debts! I'll never deny any thing you ask!—I'll make you my heir!—You shall marry my patron's daughter! possess her fortune!—Now give it me—I'm sure you will.

Clem. You are the agent of Mr. Mordent, whom, I fear, you have deeply wronged. I have a painful duty to perform, but justice must be obeyed: nothing must or shall bribe me to betray an injured man.

Item. I'll give you ten thousand pounds!—I'll give you twenty!—I'll give you fifty!—Would you rob and ruin your uncle?—Would you put him in the pillory? Would you see him hanged? (*Falls upon him again.*)—Villain;—I will have it!—'Tis mine!—I will!—I will! Thieves!—Robbers!—Murder!—Fire!

Enter Mordent, Lady Anne, Lennox, Grime, Winter, Joanna *and* Cheveril.

Mor. (*Having received the Book,*) I am glad, Mr. Item, that your inattention, and your nephew's inflexible honesty, have afforded me the means of doing myself justice: this is all I require.

Len. Here is a double testimony; your hand-writing, and your agent.

Item. (*To Grime*) Have you impeached, then?

Grime. I am a villain, a rascal, a cut-throat!

Mor. You, Mr. Clement—and you, Winter, I know not how to repay.

Joanna. My watchful guide! my never-failing friend!

Chev. Your hand, old boy! you and I must settle accounts.—I am, I know not how, many score pounds a year in your debt.

Mor. What then am I?

Joanna. And I?

Winter. If you wad pay old Jonathan Winter, it mustn't be wi' ye'er dirty money—no—no; it mun be wi' your affections.

Joanna. True, my noble protector!

(*Kisses his hand with great energy.*)

Winter. Why now, aye, that's a receipt in full; and it maks my heart gi' sic a bang as it han't had sin you were lost.

Mor. Honest worthy soul! and now to reconcile——

Chev. Come, come, make no speeches.—I'll settle the business. I am the proper person.—I have eight thousand a year, and ten thousand in my pocket. Ten! (*to Item.*) Is it ten or seventeen?

Item. Seventeen!

Joanna. What, not a word for your pretty Joanna?—Not a word, Mr. Item, against the young whipper snappers, and in favour of persons of your own age?

Item. (*aside*) Entrapp'd—betrayed in every quarter. The man whom I rais'd from squalid poverty—the nephew whom I have supported—the woman who—ha!—may the curses of Item mingle with their triumph.—(*Mordent gazes at him—his features turn from malevolence to obsequiousness.*)—Mr. Mordent, don't be too hasty—don't condemn me unheard.

Mor. Away! serpent—betrayer of my dearest confidence. I cannot look on thee without horror, when I

think on what might have been the consequences of your villany—away !

Item. (*looks all round.*) *Aside*—No hopes from subterfuge.—Then, law, I'll try thee—(*Looks all round and Exit.*)

Chev. Good bye, old Cent per Cent—waddle away like a lame duck from the Exchange, leaving behind you happiness above par—and roguery at a discount. Lennox, as a Bachelor's penance, shall marry his housemaid. You, old Moloch, go hang yourself. Joanna, my Queen of the Green Park, you much be my wife. Mordent, you must be my father—Lady Anne, you must be my half mamma—eight thousand a year shall settle scores with Clement and old Honesty here—so away with frowns and welcome smiles—smiles that will never be wanting while we can reflect them from those where their appearance is most welcome.

FINIS.

A CURE FOR ROMANCE.

MARCHANT, Printer,
Ingram-Court, London.

A CURE FOR ROMANCE.

AN OPERATIC FARCE,

In One Act,

PERFORMED FOR THE FIRST TIME,

AT THE

THEATRE ROYAL, ENGLISH OPERA HOUSE,

ON MONDAY EVENING, AUGUST 30, 1819.

BY JAMES THOMSON,

AUTHOR OF "DE COURCI," &c. &c.

THE MUSIC COMPOSED BY MR. JOLLY.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR SMITH AND ELDER, 158, FENCHURCH-STREET,
AND R. STODART, 81, STRAND.

1819.

[*One Shilling and Sixpence.*]

TO HER GRACE

THE DUCHESS OF WELLINGTON,

Princess of Waterloo,

&c. &c. &c.

MADAM,

PUBLIC approbation has conferred a value upon the following Bagatelle, which it did not previously possess, even in the partial opinion of its Author.—It is from *this* estimation of its merit, that I presume to inscribe these pages with your Grace's name, not less as a feeble tribute of acknowledgment for the repeated distinction of your Grace's condescending kindness, than as a renewed assurance of the very high respect, with which

I have the honour to subscribe myself,

MADAM,

Your Grace's

Most faithful

and obedient humble servant,

JAMES THOMSON.

Fen Church Street,

Tuesday, August 31, 1819.

ADVERTISEMENT.

FOR the original idea of this Operatic Trifle, I am indebted to the writings of a young Lady, whose literary attainments would suffer depreciation from any compliment in my power to offer, and whose diffidence would shrink even from the very inadequate tribute of my feeble eulogy.

In expressing my gratitude for the kindness and attentions of Mr. ARNOLD, *I am only repeating those sentiments of all his other friends, which are not less universally felt, than they are universally acknowledged.*

I am equally sensible of my obligations to the excellence of Mr. JOLLY'S *music, and to Mrs.* CHATTERLEY'S *very admirable personification of my romantic heroine; and if I hesitate to particularize any other performer, it is because the abilities of* all *were exerted with a zeal and an effect worthy of a far superior production. To the whole of the Dramatis Personæ, therefore, I beg to offer my best, my warmest acknowledgments; and though this general expression of thanks may appear very inadequate to the occasion, yet the deficiency will, I am confident, be attributed to an inability of expression, rather than to a want of gratitude.*

It may be necessary to observe, that some few lines of dialogue, and one song, were omitted after the first representation.

J. T.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Drake ..... Mr. W. S. Chatterley.
Charles Clover ..... Mr. Wrench.
Jeremy Tibbs ..... Mr. Wilkinson.
Whisk ..... Mr. Harley.

Caroline Drake ..... Mrs. W. S. Chatterley.
Lucy ..... Miss J. Stevenson.

The Serenade sung by
Messrs. Pearman, Huckel, and O'Callaghan.

A CURE FOR ROMANCE.

SCENE I.

A Parlour at Drake Cottage.

Enter WHISK, *much fatigued, draws a Chair, and seats himself.*

Whisk. Here I am, at last, then, safe at home again once more; spite of bad roads, stumbling horses, sloughs of despond, and quagmires,—completely knocked up;—tired as a Brighton donkey on a Saturday night in August. Really, these gentlemen in love think as little of one's repose as if doing without sleep was considered in our wages; and for a valet of my abilities, there's no rest for either bones, body, or brains; especially if any plot's going forward, and our's is surely one of the most extraordinary that ever ——*(Takes out a paper, and reads.)*—"Oil-skins, bear-skins, hairy caps, buff-belts, and leather jackets,"—quite a wardrobe for the emperor of all the conjurors, or the showman at a booth in Smithfield, or the mountebank at a country fair.

CLOVER *calls outside,*—"Whisk!—Whisk!"

Whisk. Aye, there it is again!—neither peace, nor rest, nor comfort, nor quietness,—always being called for, always wanted, like the last new novel; and, egad! if I was to leave him, my master would *find* his *loss* presently.

Clover. (Outside.) Why, Whisk!—*(Enters.)*—Oh! here you are then,—back at last,—you lazy, idle——

Whisk. Lazy, Sir!—It's a lucky thing I'm back at all, for the odds were against me.—Why, I've been overturned, Sir,—upset.

Clover. Overturned! when, where, how?

Whisk. Oh! don't be alarmed, Sir, there's no bones broke.—Nothing confused, but my head; and I saved my neck by making arrangements accordingly.

Clover. Not the first time your neck has been in jeopardy, I dare say; but how did you escape now?

Whisk. The truth is, Sir, our stage was overloaded, seven insides, and seventeen out,—coachman drunk, and away we went,—on one side, a *green* ditch,—on the other, a *brown* dunghill, I preferred the latter, and pitched plump in its middle, amidst a numerous congress of cocks and hens, ducks and geese, pigeons and turkey poults.

Clover. Pshaw! let's have none of your *fowl* stories now; leave the poultry, and—

Whisk. I did, Sir, as soon as possible, vacated my seat for a better place,—hired a beast of burden to carry your bundle, and am just arrived, Sir, with a most carnivorous appetite, and dreadfully dry.

Clover. Ah! your complaints of that sort are like a hump-back, perfectly incurable; but have you secured our *materiel*, as the French call it?—Have you brought the wedding-clothes and the bride-cake?

Whisk. All, Sir, every thing, as per catalogue, —*(gives a paper)*—"Oil-skins, bear-skins, long cloaks, buff-belts, and leather jackets," all safely stowed at the hermitage, Sir.

Clover. At the hermitage!—oh! they're all *right* then.

Whisk. No, Sir, they're all *left*, if you please; and now, Sir, after a good dinner, I'll proceed to follow your farther instructions.

Clover. Do so; and remember, your reward depends on your exertions; for after spending half your life in a circulating library, you ought, at least, to understand the art and mystery of scheming.

Whisk. In theory, I do, Sir, but I want practice; for when I married, Mrs. W. ran away with *me.* It was leap-year, Sir, and she had a way of managing every thing herself; put up the bans as it were last Sunday, and three weeks afterwards we were made a *happy* couple, at St. Michael's, Crooked-lane.

Clover. Well, well, never mind Mrs. W. *now.*

Whisk. I never did *then*, Sir; for, alas! our match had brimstone at both ends!—My poor Peggy, Sir, married for money, so did I, and both of us were blessedly bit!—*short commons* followed, Sir——

Clover. And then *Doctors' Commons*, I suppose;—but I've no leisure to laugh at your bad jokes now; therefore away, Sir, let the post-chaise wait as I directed; despatch your other business as quick as possible; and then prepare to receive Orlando and Caroline at the Abbey ruins. [*Exit.*

Whisk. Orlando and Caroline!—Oh! I understand, Sir; you, and "the dear object of your hopes," as Roderick Random calls it,—Charles Clover, Esquire, and Miss Drake;—all shall be

in readiness, all in proper order, quite in the style of the last new comedy,—romantic! mysterious! astonishing! and unnatural!—and if that don't satisfy the lady, take my word for it, she's not easily pleased; but it will do, I know it will do, and your plot will go off,—*whiz!* like a sky-rocket, all in a blaze! She'll be bothered! like a novel reader, when the third volume's missing, and every body can tell what that is; for now, there isn't a village in the kingdom, that has a post-office, a lawyer, and a parish-clerk, but has also a shop, flourished over in blue and gold, with—" Circulating Library, and Books lent out to Read!" Oh! I can yet remember the labours of a summer's afternoon at Hastings!

SONG.—WHISK.

In each town, whate'er its name,
Where the bumpkins ape their betters,
Stands a shop of mighty fame,
Full of literature and letters.
All its columns,
Cramm'd with volumes,
Voyages, travels,
Authors' cavils,
Plays and histories,
Filled with mysteries,
Tales of terror,
Scenes of error,
Crowd a circulating library table!

(Speaking.) Bless me! how the subscribers bother one; all sending at once, and every body wanting the same book!—Here, Tom, run with *City Nobility* to *Alderman Dabbs*, —*The Wife of Two Husbands* to the *Widow Tryagain;* carry *The Red Tiger* to the *Wild Beast shop;* and take *The Beggar Girl* to the *Workhouse!*—" *Muster Drive'emtight*, the cooper, Sir, sent me to *ax* for *The Tale of a Tub!*"—Oh! my compliments to Mr. D———, very sorry, but Mrs. *Hogshead* has

had my *Tale of a Tub* these three weeks!—" I say, Master, I wants 1820."—Do you?—then, really Sir, you must wait, for we shan't have 1820 till *next year!*—" O, Circulate! when may I expect *Tales of my Landlord?*"—Why, Sir, about *quarter-day*, I should imagine.—" My master, Sir, if you please, Dr. *Quietall*, wants *The last Man.*"—My respects, but Mr. *Box'em*, the undertaker, has had my *last Man* for some time past.—" A! ha! Monsieur de Bibliothécaire! Mister, Sare, de library man, j'ai besoin de *Jean Bull*, si vous plais,—if you please, I vant *de Englisman's Fire-side!*"—Very welcome to look at it here, Sir, but *John Bull's fire-side* never goes from *home.*—Well, Mister, what's your business?—" Why, Sir, Miss *Round-about* wants a *Mysterious Husband.*"—Very good, then I'll send her *Don Quixote* and *Tristram Shandy*, and she may take her choice. " O, Mr. Library-keeper, my daughters are most sadly in want of something to edify them."—*Plain sense*, perhaps, Ma'am; a great many young ladies want that?—" Oh, dear! no, no, no! something more fashionable, something that every body likes."—Oh! *Cheap Living*, and *Five Thousand a Year!* I'll send them home directly, Ma'am.

Thus, whatever be your taste,
When you've got some time to waste,
To a Library be a subscriber!

Though the *golden* age has fled,
We've a *paper* one succeeding;
And though few like to be read,
There are fewer don't like reading—
Tales of Fairies,
Wild vagaries,
Dismal novels,
Gypsies' hovels,
Dark romances,
Songs and dances,
Art and Science,
Form alliance,
On a circulating library table!

(Speaking.) "O, Circulate, my fine fellow! I want the *first* of your *Patronage.*"—Beg pardon, Sir, but I never give *my patronage* without a *deposit.* "Number 786, Tom, *Hannah Hewit.*"—Gone out with *Caleb Williams,* Sir. "Here, then, change *A Winter in London,* for *A Summer by the Seaside;* and fetch *More Ghosts* from the *Apothecary.*" "Pray, Sir, can you recommend me some sensible book of Travels?"—Certainly, Ma'am, we've lots of them;—there's *A Donkey Tour to Brighton,* and *Baron Munchausen,* both works that will keep their *footing.* "My mistress has quite done with *Don Giovanni,* Sir, and now she wants *My Master's Secret.*"—Haven't got it myself; so take my compliments, and carry her *The Jealous Wife,* and *Fatal Curiosity;* they'll do till to-morrow. "I'm come, Sir, for the second of *The Scottish Chiefs.*"—Went out at the door as you came in, ma'am: the *third*'s at the snuff-shop, round the corner, and the *fourth*'s with an Irish lady, at the potato warehouse. "Ah! those *Scottish Chiefs* are always favourites; but it's very hard, though, to have one's *tale* disturbed in this manner."—So my dog thinks, Ma'am, for you're *treading* upon *his.* "Please, Sir, the *Clerk's* daughter wants *The Parsonage House.*"—Does she? Very moderate upon my word; then she must try *The Vicar of Wakefield.* "Eh, now, have you got *The Way to Grow Rich?*"—Very sorry to say *No,* Sir; It's been out of print these seven years. Any thing else?—"Yes, Sir, something funny, if you please."—Something *funny?* Oh! then take *Mrs. Wiggins,* and *Laugh when you can.* "Any thing new, this age, Circulate?"—Yes, Sir, every thing new in every department; every new book added, as soon as published; and every attention paid to every new subscriber.

Then, whatever be your taste,
When you've got some time to waste,
To a Library be a subscriber.

SCENE II.

A Drawing-Room at Drake Cottage, with French windows leading to the Garden.

Enter CLOVER.

Clover. Yes! she has at length consented; and now, then, after scornfully refusing even to see me as her father's choice, Caroline will run away with me as her own dear Orlando, whom she has known and loved these six months! Our meeting at Hastings was most fortunate, for it enabled me to study her character, while I concealed my own. Yet it is but rather a hazardous experiment, I fear, after all, to marry a girl so bewitched with enthusiasm and romance, as to have no taste for any thing but the marvellous, and who is determined that her spouse shall be a hero, because she fancies herself a heroine. There, however, I can accommodate her, for, love, love, love! all thy frolics are unaccountable, and even the torch of Cupid himself, is very often little better than a Jack-o'-lantern.

SONG.—CLOVER.

(Omitted in the Representation.)

Oh! love's like a will-o'-the-wisp at night,
It can bother, betray, and bewitch,
Or, close to a bog, popping out of your sight,
Leave you up to the chin in a ditch.
Then, ladies and gentlemen, travelling that way,
Let love's will-o'-the-wisp never lead you astray.

But burning all pure, like a gas light's blaze,
When it's splendours their radiance impart,
You may wander secure, in the light of its rays,
For the home of its beams is the heart.
Then, ladies and gentlemen, still as ye stray,
Let the gas lights of Cupid illumine your way.

I may reason, and I may argue, but I must love; for love is very seldom reasonable, and hates argument,—that's logic. But Caroline loves me as Orlando, if she rejects me as Clover: then though her father is a vulgar old poulterer, and the daughter is—

DRAKE *calls outside*,—"Dolly! I say Dolly Drake."

Clover. There he is. Talk of the devil, and—so now for our usual afternoon's conversation about—

Drake. (Outside.) Dolly Drake! *(Enters.)* Why,—ah, Mister Clover! how do you do again, hey? I'm a looking after my *darter* Dolly. Why, do you know, she's come back from her *wisit* to Mr. Ringletub's, and so now—

Clover. Dolly! my dear Sir, for shame. Now do recollect yourself,—Dolly, you know, is such a coarse, unfashionable, common, vulgar, Fish-street-Hill sort of name.

Drake. Unfashionable and vulgar! don't tell me; it is her name, arn't it? Why, when she was christened, Mister Clover, my old fool of a sister wanted her called Caroline, I would have her named Dorothy; so, at last, we split the difference, and gave her both. Two names, forsooth! about as much use as two tongues, when we all know a woman can make quite noise enough with one. Howsomever,—but, I say, Mister Clover, when do you and she go to church, hey?—and when am I to be grandfather?

Clover. Really, Sir, while Miss Drake refuses

me even the honour of an interview, it's quite impossible to—

Drake. Oh! but I've made up my mind about that, and you shall see her this afternoon at tea; why, I've set my heart upon it, and harn't I invited you, and your man Whisk, down here on purpose to meet her, because you're the oldest son of the oldest friend I ever had?

Clover. Your kindness makes me feel so, Sir, but—

Drake. Why, what the deuce ails you then? Your father and I began our acquaintance together at wet nurse; we were rocked in the same cradle, and flogged with the same rod. He went to *Hingey*, and made a *fortin* amongst the Blackamoors. I stayed at home, set up a poultry-shop, at Norton-Falgate, sold fowls in Bishopsgate-without, and *wery* pretty pickings I made; and now, when I wants to join our families, and make you and Dolly comfortable for life, you fly out like a goose at a red night-cap; but I tell you I won't have none of her tantrums, and so it's of no use trying to bamboozle me, because—

Clover. My dear Sir, indeed, I am as anxious as you can be; but really——

Drake. Aye, there, there you fly out again!—I tell you, nothing has gone right since I came down here; first the house was haunted by the spirit of a Scotch pedlar, and we burnt down two rooms in laying the ghost; next, the cats *pigeoned* my *poultry*, and the boys *cabbaged* my *turneps;* and now, because I've pitched upon you as a husband for my *darter*, you both of you fight shy, like two strange cats in a garret.

Clover. Why, remember, Sir, I have several rivals to encounter, you know. First, there's your neighbour, Mr.—Mr. Tibbs.

Drake. What, of Hogs'-end Cottage?—why,

bless you! he's no more chance than a badger has with a bear; he don't like Poetry, so it was all up with he before we left Norton-Falgate.

Clover. Then, there's her mysterious lover, Sir, that——

Drake. What, him as writes so many *werses*, and nobody knows where they comes from?—why, I'm afraid, she does like him a little, that's the truth of it,—that Mister Hor—Horly—Hor—

Clover. Orlando, Sir,—but do you really not know him?—Can't you guess who he is?

Drake. Haven't an idea!

Clover. (Aside.) Not many, I believe!—all's right yet, then.—Nor I, Sir, can't possibly imagine, but one discovery I've made, and——

Drake. Have you though, Mister, and what is it?—does it concern my Dolly?

Clover. It does, Sir, and I now consider it my duty to inform you. By the ingenuity of my servant, I have discovered that Caroline has long known and corresponded with this Orlando; their plans are now completed, and this evening they elope together.

Drake. Elope to-night!—what, he run away with my darter?

Clover. In a few minutes, Sir. But with your assistance we shall counteract their schemes; for I have provided a disguise, in which you may accompany them. My groom was bribed to be of the party: I have arranged for you to take his place, and thus——

Drake. Well, I can't see through it exactly; but I'll go, if you advises me, if its only to take care of my darter; for there arn't such another clever girl between here and Bishopsgate-without.—But, I say though, can't you go too, hey Mister? and then——

Clover. Impossible, Sir; for you know, I am

engaged to——But, hush! Miss Drake is coming, therefore I had better retire and prepare for your departure; and while——

Drake. Nonsense, I say she shall see you: what, arn't I master in my own house?

Clover. (Aside.) I must conceal my features, then, and trust to chance for her not knowing me.—But, my dear Sir, as Caroline has never seen me——

[*They retire talking,* CLOVER *muffling his face, and turning away from* CAROLINE.

Enter CAROLINE DRAKE, *reading a Letter.*

Caro. "'Tis night!—Unearthly hands my curtains shake,
And all are wrapt in sleep,—save those that wake.
Those!—who like me, of every joy bereft,
Have lost each comfort,—but the one that's left!
Whilst to my fond entreaties deaf and dumb,
The more I call,—the more you will not come!
But frowning still, my agonies renew,
Nor let me go to sleep,—to dream of *you!*"

—Sublimity! pathos! and affection! blended in harmonious union. Thus can the pen of love annihilate the pangs of absence, and tune the bosom's feelings into extacy!—Orlando! why did I wrong thy constancy with one ungenerous doubt? —why did I——Ha! that odious Clover, I suppose:—then I must conceal this paper, and meet them smilingly; and yet, alas! how well the poet sings,—"It is, indeed, no easy task, for *barefaced* grief to wear a *mask* of joy!"

Clover. (Aside to Drake.) Now, my dear Sir, not a hint that you suspect, or else——

Drake. (Aside to Clover.) No, no, bless you, leave me alone for that;—you shall see how I'll manage,—you shall hear.——Ah! Dolly Drake!

my duck!—we've been a looking for you every where,—we've been a consulting about your wedding, as is to be, harn't we, Mister Clover?

Caro. That wedding, Sir, can never be.—Is not my sympathetic soul already given to another? and would you tear asunder two fond hearts thus twined in unison?

Drake. Nonsense!—why Dolly, girl, it's my opinion you're cracked! howsomever, in this case, I say, you shall, because I'm determined on it.

Caro. Nay, Sir, I cannot be compelled;—

> " For here I call yon conscious clouds to witness,
> All friends, all right of parents I disclaim,
> And my Orlando shall be Father! Mother!
> Brother! Uncle! Aunt! Cousin! and all to me."

Clover. (Aside.) Excellent! egad.

Drake. (Whistles.) Oh! it's plain!—she's moonstruck, and instead of being married at *St. Anne's*, she wants to be tied up at *St. Luke's!*—hey, Mister Clover?

Clover. (Aside.) I must disguise my voice, or Caroline may recognise me, and ruin all.——Oh! that was merely a quotation, you know, Sir; but if Miss Drake really so much prefers this unknown Orlando, I beseech you, Sir, let me yield her to him—Ahem!—let me——

Drake. Why, I say, Mister, how you croaks, just like a donkey with a sore throat; why, I hopes you haven't got a quinsey.

Caro. Exalted goodness!—but ah, Sir, does not our Shakspeare say,—" Fathers have flinty hearts, no prayers can move them!"—If Mr. Drake had read, as I have; if he had studied Marmion —Orlando Furioso—Waverley—Lalla Rookh—Sebastian Sebastiano—

Drake. Lally Rooke!—why who the plague

was he, Dolly?—Rooke, our churchwarden at Norton-Falgate?

Caro. *He*, Sir!—She was a Princess, crossed in love, as I am.—But had you read Sir Charles Grandison—Peregrine Pickle—Guy Mannering—Childe Harold—Thaddeus of Warsaw—Children of the Abbey—Tales of my Landlord—Florence Macarthy—

Drake. Tales of my Grandmother!—why, Dolly, you distract me! and I harn't been put into such a quandary since that there hot Michaelmas, as spoiled me so many gooses:—but I tell you what, I smells a rat; and so—Ahem!—I mean, I begins to want my tea, and my buttered crumpets, and so, Mister Clover,——

Clover. I am at your service, Sir, and Miss Caroline will follow us. *(Aside.)* Now to escape undiscovered, and then——

Drake. Yes, you'll follow, Dolly, and we'll make ourselves snug and comfortable.—Come, Mister Clover, you and I'll go first and scald the tea-pot, and get all ready, and Dolly shall come after us.

[*Exeunt* DRAKE *and* CLOVER.

Caro. Now, then, my Father tyrannizes over me, and, *happily*, I am completely *miserable!*—Now, "hopeless Love finds *comfort* in *despair!*" and I am, indeed, a heroine!—But, then,—how shall I act?—like Juliet, or Zelica, or Constance, or Bellamira?—"Come, gentle night!—Give me Orlando! and when he shall die—take him and cut him into little stars!"—Yet stay—my letter!—perhaps *there* I may find—*(Takes out the letter, and reads.)* "Amiable, enchanting Caroline! we shall soon escape from the soulless intercourse of vulgar life, and find peace in the retirement of my native valley. *This* evening, at six, the signal of a serenade beneath your balcony, shall tempt you to

my arms, when I will waft you from the vile shackles of home, to the Paradise of Love and Rapture!

"That blissful rapture—that delicious spell!
Too vast to suffer, too sublime to tell!—
Which bids us gaze, groan, quiver, and adore,
Oh!—my soul swoons, and I can say—no more.

"Your own,
"ORLANDO."

Yes, thou dear youth, who hast so often shared my moon-light rambles on the ocean beach, I will brave and break the trammels of heart-freezing custom, and share with thee the happiness of love and reason.—I will go off with thee at six, and it wants now but a few moments of the hour.—Yet, dare I hazard?—Yes; I have pledged to him my promise; I am prepared for all the miseries that should fill five volumes! and am impatient once more to behold——

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. Mr. Tibbs, Miss!—he'll be up stairs directly.

Caro. At *this* eventful crisis of my fate!—Lucy, I cannot be interrupted now, show him to my father, and say——

Lucy. O Miss!—Your Pa' and Mr. Clover are both gone out together, and said they should not be back till supper time.

Caro. Gone out together! then Cupid smiles upon his votaries, and I shall escape unnoticed: and as for Mr. Tibbs——

Enter JEREMY TIBBS.

Tibbs. Here I am, Miss! all fresh as a daisy. Come to pay my devoirs at your feet!—There!

—arn't that an improvement?—Why, my stars and garters! Miss, if you don't look prettier than ever you did, I'll be shot!

Caro. (Aside.) What shall I say to him?—explain it all, and——Oh! no, no, I must dissimulate, and——Lucy, you need not wait. (*Exit* Lucy.) I am very sorry, Sir, my Father should be absent, but perhaps, to-morrow——

Tibbs. O! thank ye, Miss, I'll stop now if you please, for I'm come to have a dish of chat, and a dish of tea, along with you.—Your Pa' will be back by supper-time, the young woman says, and I arn't in no hurry myself.

Caro. (Aside.) I wish you were, I'm sure—would not detain you, Sir, on any account; your time is far too valuable, and therefore——

Tibbs. Oh! yes, Miss, but I've done for to-day—why we've ploughed the five acres—and sowed the winter tares,—and sent off the bullocks,—and loaded the straw,—and thrashed the barley,—and mowed the meadow,—and sold the pigs, and—

Caro. (Aside.) O, thou tormenting farmer!—but I must try some other plan——Will you permit me, Mr. Tibbs, to ask your sentiments upon a subject of—?

Tibbs. Certainly, Miss, certainly—Now it's a coming!—There arn't many subjects, Ma'am, that I don't know *summat* about.

Caro. I have been contemplating, Sir, the merits of our ancient and modern bards; Homer, Sophocles, Milton, Shakspeare, Pope, Thomson, Cowper, Burns, Byron, Scott, Moore, and Peter Pindar. Which is the greatest poet?—You have their works—you have a library, of course, Sir?

Tibbs. O yes, Miss!—but there arn't many *real* books in it, though—most of them's sham, *wooden ones*, you see;—but there's Moore's Almanac, and Burn's Justice, and Every Man his own Washer-

woman! and Æsop's Fables, and Mrs. Glasse's Cookery,—and—and, I believe, that's almost all.

Caro. (*Aside.*) Illiterate booby! And could you, Sir, hope to find in me a soul so grovelling as to listen to any one who reads Moore's Almanac, and Glasse's Cookery? No, Sir; though as the immortal Hudibras expresses it,

"Love is a fire, that burns and sparkles
In men, as naturally as in charcoals!"

Yet, Sir, we part this moment, never to meet again; for, (*Clock strikes six*) hark!—I am summoned!—and now, good evening, Sir.

Tibbs. My stars and garters! what a tongue! —Well, Miss, I'm going, though you needn't have turned up your nose at me, Miss, for there is a certain person, that shall be nameless, that will be very glad to——So, good night, Miss, I'm a-going, you see, good night,—Miss, good night! My stars and garters! [*Exit.*

Caro. At length I am once more alone, then—but the clock has struck, and there is yet no signal!—Am I deceived?—Oh, no! Orlando never could betray—eh!—(*Music heard without.*)—It is his dulcet serenade! it is my hero's melody.

SERENADE, *sung without.*

Oh! banish all vain alarms, Love!
No longer make delay;
But fly to these waiting arms, Love!
And hence let's haste away.
The light of thy beaming eyes, Love!
Shall guide us as we roam,
And cloudless planets and skies, Love!
Will smile our welcome home.
Then banish all vain alarms, Love!
No longer make delay,
But fly to these waiting arms, Love!
And hence let's haste away.

Caro. How my heart throbs! but that becomes not an heroine. My scarf and hat!—(*Puts them on.*) No one is at hand to watch me, and wrapt in mystery and silence, thus I fly to love and happiness. [*Exit.*

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. At last, she's gone, then! (*Looks out of the window.*) The chaise is waiting,—they hand her in, and off they drive!—Little does Miss Caroline think who *they* are, though; and, for my part, I've had a pain in my limbs with keeping their secrets so long on both sides; and if I hadn't been well paid, I dare say I should have been laid up; for it's very hard to have a mystery that one mustn't tell to any body.—Indeed, I think it ought to be my turn to be run away with next; and if Mr. Whisk had any eyes, he'd see, that some folks are as handsome as some other folks.—My time will come though, I don't doubt; for it has always been vastly fashionable to run away to be married; and true love, they say, bids defiance to bolts, bars, and watchmen!

SONG.—LUCY.

Sir Oliver locked his castle-gate,
And his daughter he shut in her tower;
But the wit of a woman can conquer fate,
When love in her breast has power.
So she sung, that her lover, who lurked below,
The mind of his mistress quick might know,
Oh! sweet is the sight
Of the greenwoods bright,
And soon to their bowers I'll wing my flight.

Sir Oliver raised the latch next morn,
And the portal ope'd with care;
But no longer his daughter wept forlorn,
For she was no longer there!
But a scroll on her couch these tidings spread,
And Sir Oliver raved, when the words he read—
Oh! sweet was the sight,
Of the greenwoods bright,
And there with my lover I've wing'd my flight.

[*Exit.*

SCENE III.

The Interior of a Gothic Ruin, with the Moon seen through its dilapidated Windows.

Enter WHISK, *with a Bear-skin Dress on his Arm.*

Whisk. I'm sadly afraid now, that my new livery won't fit; and I'm very certain I shan't look well in it,—Quite a Robinson Crusoe, I dare say,—Like an ambassador from the Red Snow country, or an old he-goat on his hind legs!—Some people jump out of their skins when they're going to be married, but my master and I have no small trouble in jumping into ours. So far, however, we've managed all well; and if the Lady doesn't happen to find out that Orlando is Charles Clover, and only believes herself ten miles off, instead of half a one, we shall puzzle her yet, and she'll ——Eh, egad! they're coming though!—I hear their chaise wheels, and their horses' feet,—They'll be in directly, and I must get my skin in order to receive them. [*Exit.*

Enter CLOVER, *wrapped up in a large Cloak, and flapped Hat, conducting* CAROLINE DRAKE.

Clover. At length, all danger of pursuit is past, dear Caroline, and we are now safe at home.

Caro. Home, home, Orlando!—Is this then the retirement you told me of?

Clover. This is Cupid's solitude, my home, my love! and henceforth your's; and, therefore, while I throw aside my cloak and hat, do you prepare to—(*Throws off his disguise, and discovers a terrific dress of Bear-skins, &c.*)

Caro. (*Screams.*) Orlando! my dear Orlando!—is that your usual,—your customary dress?

Clover. Dress, Caroline! oh, yes, yes, most certainly. When in the world with you, I yielded to some of its unmeaning fashions; but at home, imitate Nature, who provides herself one suit a year.—Man, you know, as your Poet says,—

> "Man wants but little here below,
> Nor wants that little long!"

Caro. And will you wear that always?

Clover. Always, my love! always: I study economy, and shall recommend you to do the same.—Had lace and muslins been necessary, we should have found them growing upon furze-bushes, ready made—Bear-skins and leather, Caroline, are at once wholesome and lasting,—Magliabechi, the sage, wore a hairy doublet,—I follow his example, and you will of course do so too.—But perhaps you are expecting some refreshment, and wish me to——

Caro. It will be tea-time shortly, my dear Orlando; and that will be quite early enough for me.

Clover. Refined souls, like our's, Caroline,

feed upon love and sentiment, and have no fixed time for such a mean repast as tea: since no nation, family, or individual, ever yet agreed about the proper hour, I take my meals as hunger requires them, and as nature bids me, but if your appetite is keener, there is a milch goat about the premises, and lettuces in the garden.

Caro. A milch goat and lettuces!—But the evenings are now getting very cold, and I see no fire, Orlando.

Clover. Fire! oh, fire! Fire is an element never used for me, as I eat and drink all things in their most natural state, and take proper exercise to keep me warm: however, I believe, there are sticks and combustibles in the vaults below, and if you wish to light a fire, you know, you can borrow a tinder-box.

Caro. Me light a fire! me! nay, nay, my dear Orlando, are we not ———?

Clover. At home, my love! I am not called Orlando; my real name is Humphrey.

Caro. Humphrey!

Clover. Yes, Humphrey, my dear! Humphrey Shufflebotham de Gazabo! a name long celebrated in history, and hereafter to be rendered eminent by us and ours. But you don't seem quite pleased, Caroline. You have no objection to it, my love! have you? You don't dislike Humphrey?

Caro. Oh, no, no! not much,—not—but your friend, the stout, short, lusty gentleman, who travelled with us, Sir, will he not expect his coffee?

Clover. You have already proved yourself superior to vulgar prejudices, Madam, by coming with me hither before our nuptial ceremony, and I would, therefore, hope——

Caro. I have, Orlando! I mean,—*Hum*,—*Hum*,

—I have, *Sir*,—it was a sublime hazard, and I have braved it: but you will surely not now delay.

Clover. Certainly not, Madam; since even Kalmuc Tartars, Bedouin Arabs, and Catabaw Indians, perform marriage rites: but I yet expect from you a more exalted proof of unsophisticated nobleness of soul; listen, therefore, while I tell you that the short stout gentleman you mentioned,—the friend who assisted to take care of you, is my *first wife!* who will reside *here* with us.

Caro. Your first wife! and in man's clothes?

Clover. She wears them for convenience. We have no money; and live here to save rent and taxes; now, as it is plain that *you* can neither dig, nor spin, nor mend brick-work, I must retain my useful wife for all those purposes; she will do all our little household labour, while you shall be our dazzling luminary of intellect to embellish and enliven me.

Caro. *Two* wives at once!

Clover. Yes, only two, my love! and I dare say I shall find them plenty.

Caro. But never will I be one of them. You have abused my unsuspecting confidence!—You have betrayed my trusting kindness!—You have absconded with an heiress! and my only comfort is, that there are ample laws to avenge such unheard-of perfidy.

Clover. How kindly considerate!—but proceed, Madam, pray proceed. The Chinese wisely consider a lady's tongue as her only weapon; and I perceive you know how to preserve *your's* from rusting. My company, therefore, may now be dispensed with;—our servant shall conduct you to your chamber, and early to-morrow, you shall

become Mrs. Humphrey Shufflebotham de Gazabo! [*Exit.*

Caro. Then the impostor has deceived me, and I may be amongst a gang of robbers!—but I'll escape!—I'll run away!—I'll—though this is indeed a most romantic incident after all; and if some valiant Knight would appear to vanquish him, and set me free, and demolish these ruins! and—but no, alas! those happy days of chivalry are fled!—or, perhaps, it was all a joke! and Orlando will return and explain, and beg my pardon,—yes, yes, it must be so!—I hear him coming!—but I shall frown at first, and seem severe, and unrelenting.—He don't come though! nor he don't mean it, I dare say!—oh, no! no! it's too plain, I am deceived! betrayed! imposed upon! and now—eh!—his servant can tell me all, I'll bribe him for intelligence, and then—but he is here.

Enter WHISK, *dressed the same as Clover.*

Whisk. (Aside.) Now for a *long* face, and a *long* lie!—ahem!—My master sent me, Miss.—

Caro. Oh!—you are the footman, then, and in the same savage garb—

Whisk. The valet, Ma'am, at your service.

Caro. And your name, is—

Whisk. (*Aside.*) My name!—egad! we forgot that!—my name,—my name, Ma'am,—my name is Humphrey!—Humphrey, Ma'am!

Caro. Humphrey! why that's your master's name!

Whisk. Is it, Ma'am!—Oh, yes, yes! as you say, Ma'am, both our names are Humphrey. You see, Miss, my master's a very singular character, very retired, dresses like the Brown Bear in Pic-

cadilly,—loves solitude, and keeps no company but me and his wife!

Caro. And very abstemious too, is he not?

Whisk. Oh, very, Miss! very,—why, bless you, we've sometimes four fast days a week! and the other three, live upon roots and spring water!

Caro. Live upon roots!

Whisk. Yes, Ma'am! *ingons*, and radishes, with water-cresses for Sundays; but depend upon it, Miss, my master isn't what he appears to be.

Caro. Disguised you think! exactly my opinion,—but then—who is he? what is he? where does he come from?

Whisk. Why, there I'm puzzled myself:—he's one of two things, but I don't know which,—he's —come a little more this way,—he's either a foreign duke——

Caro. Do *you* think so then?—a foreigner!—perhaps the Duke of——

Whisk. Very likely, Miss, or a highwayman.

Enter CLOVER *behind, still disguised.*

Caro. A highwayman! Then you must instantly aid me to escape,—conduct me hence, and I'll reward you,—I'll make your fortune;—you shall marry my maid Lucy,—I'll give you a cottage to live near me, and make you happy for life.

Whisk. I can refuse nothing to *such* eloquence! Madam, I'll take the cottage, and I'll set you free; we will fly together, and though my master may say——

Clover. (Comes forward.) You scoundrel!—and you, Madam! who would elope with my own servant!—have you considered the fittest punishment for such a crime?

Caro. I have incurred none, Sir, for I am still free, and I will never——

Clover. Caffrarian law, Madam, directs me to use a stick,—German justice desires me to have your head shaved,—the Mexican code demands one of your ears,—and the Indian institutes allow you to be devoured by tigers, or trampled to death by elephants; choose, therefore, your own sentence, and I'll put it into execution.

Caro. Sir, I have injured no one; and I once more desire——

Clover. The ancient Russians, Madam, recommended a boiling tea-kettle, but having no such useless luxury in my premises, I cannot indulge you. Retire, therefore, for to-night, and in the morning, make choice of your own mode of expiation.

Caro. I will retire, Sir, but with far other feelings than I came. Your conduct has alarmed me into safety, even on the verge of that precipice on which I trembled: and the last hour has taught me a lesson, that I shall recollect for life. Farewell, then, Sir, and remember, that to-morrow I return to my deserted friends, and that *we* part for ever. [*Exit.*

Clover. Remember! I shall love and remember this happy evening while I can recollect any thing. But we've not finished yet; so now, Whisk, is the grating open, and the ladder fixed?

Whisk. Every thing most temptingly ready, Sir; and if the young lady don't try to escape now, it's not our fault.

Clover. Do you remain on guard here, then, while I go round to meet her in the garden, and let us but succeed now, and our achievement is complete. [*Exit.*

Whisk. Very funny all this, certainly; making love in a leather jacket, trimmed with bear-skin. I shouldn't wonder if it becomes fashionable, and we get a patent for the invention, receive the

freedom of the City in a *leather* box, and are made liverymen of the worshipful company of *Skinners*. But, who have we here, I wonder; egad! he looks like one of the corporation.

Enter JEREMY TIBBS, *tipsy*.

Tibbs. My stars and garters! what a queer place!—doors wide open, and nobody inside!—I shall just make free to look about me a bit, and if I pops upon any body unawares, I must tell 'em who I am. I shall say—

Whisk. Pray, Sir, who the devil are you?

Tibbs. Who am I! why—my stars and garters! what a figure!—Who am I too, well, that's a good one! Why I'm a magistrate, and you're a smuggler; so I must cross-examine you. Pray, Mr. Whisker-face, do you know who you're a talking to?

Whisk. I know you have no business *here*, and therefore, bundle you must.

Tibbs. That won't do, young man,—that won't do, you mustn't *prevarificate* before a justice; I've been a drinking grog with my lawyer, Mister Rabbit-skin, and we've been a talking about you, and so, says I—*(A scream without.)*—Hey! halloo! my stars and garters, what's that? Where am I? What's the matter?

Whisk. *(Aside.)* This drunken booby will ruin all, if I can't get rid of him. The matter, Sir, why it's a ghost! and if you don't go directly,—

Tibbs. A ghost! then I'll stop, for I should like to see a ghost of all things. Pray, Mister, is it a *he* goblin, or a *she* goblin, hey? *(Another scream.)*

Whisk. *(Aside.)* All's over, now then,—here they come, and I must drag him away by force. So, Sir, if you won't go by fair means, I must try

(Seizes TIBBS, *who struggles violently, and enter* CLOVER, DRAKE, *and* LUCY, *in long Cloaks, &c. conducting* CAROLINE.*)*

Tibbs. My stars and garters! here's all the gang.

Caro. Imprisoned here again! Why did I leave the protection of a fond father, to be treated thus? Oh! had I but listened to Clover?

Clover. You would have fled to *him* then, Madam, when I seized—

Caro. I would, Sir, I would have sought those friends, whom in a moment of romantic folly I deserted, but to whom I would now return, that we may live and die together.

Drake. (Throwing off his cloak.) My dear Dolly! I can't hold no longer. Come to my arms, my dear. *(Embraces her.)* And *there's* a husband, who deserves you, if you were as rich again. He's told me all about your meeting at Hastings, and this was all his contrivance.

Tibbs. My stars and garters!

Caro. My father! This indeed is happiness. And was Mr. Clover then your companion?

Clover. (Throwing off his cloak, and appearing in his usual dress.) The mystery is at an end, and Charles Clover is your own Orlando, Caroline. Will you forgive him the deception, and reward his love?

Caro. Forgive you! Oh, I owe you my heart's thanks, for having recalled my fancy from its wanderings, and waked me from a dangerous dream of error. To you, father, I am indebted—

Drake. For having gone without my tea and buttered crumpets, and capered about here like a hare by moonlight.

Tibbs. To me, Miss, for going away at six o'clock, and leaving the coast clear for you to go away too.

Whisk. And to me, Madam, for having helped my master to a good wife, and made him *jump out of his skin* for joy. So shall I presently!

Lucy. And to me, Ma'am, for holding my tongue and keeping the secret—and that was no very easy matter you know.

Caro. To each and all I am indebted, for all have acted admirably. I have learned that visions of fancy cannot confer happiness, and our numerous friends here will, I hope, join me in congratulating the success of

A CURE FOR ROMANCE.

FINALE.—LUCY.

Thus our tour through Love's labyrinth brought to an end,
To you now the Bard sends this tuneful petition;
That mirth and good humour its course may attend,
Since laughter for care is the safest physician.
Then smile and be gay,
Bid dull Sorrow—away!
Change grief into gladness, and night into day,
Whilst, cheer'd by your plaudits, we strive to entwine
The laurel of Phœbus round Momus's shrine!

THE END.

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WITH A

PREFACE;

CONTAINING THE

CORRESPONDENCE OF THE AUTHOR

WITH THE

COMMITTEE OF DRURY LANE THEATRE; P. MOORE, Esq. M.P.;
AND MR. KEAN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"THE PHILOSOPHY OF NATURE."

> The Stage, my Lords, and the Press are two of our Out-sentries.—If we remove them;—if we hoodwink them;—if we throw them in Fetters;—the Enemy may surprize us!—LORD CHESTERFIELD. *Wright's Parliamentary History*, Vol. x. p. 340.

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PREFACE.

DRURY LANE THEATRE.

AS the following Tragedy, while in MS., excited a considerable degree of interest and curiosity, in several literary circles, I presume to give a history of it.

Early in the month of November, 1817, it was presented to the Gentlemen, forming the Committee o Drury Lane Theatre ; and accepted in a manner, that I can never reflect upon, without pleasure and pride. They immediately voted me the freedom of their house ; and promised, that my Tragedy should command the whole strength of the Theatre.

A short time after its acceptance, the Theatre closed, for three weeks ; in consequence of the death of Her Royal Highness, the Princess CHARLOTTE OF WALES —Previous to its re-opening, Sir Lumley Skeffington Bart., told me, that he understood, it was intended to open the house with an ORATORIO ; in compliment to the general feelings of the Public, on the late melancholy occasion : and that considerable expectation would be excited, relative to any Address, that might be delivered, previous to the commencement.

In consequence of this intimation, I wrote, at the desire of a Friend, an Address for the occasion, and sent it to the Committee of the Theatre.—It arrived too late: —many had previously been sent in ; and, among the

rest, one, written by the celebrated Author of the PLEASURES OF HOPE, and GERTRUDE OF WYOMING. The Committee, however, were pleased to honour the Author with the following Testimonial.

" The Committee of Drury Lane Theatre present " their unanimous thanks to the Author of the *Philoso-* " *phy of Nature*, and *Amusements in Retirement*, for the " tender of a Monody, written on the death of Her " Royal Highness, the most illustrious Princess CHAR- " LOTTE OF WALES ; and, though it could not be adopt- " ed, they desire to recognize this farther acceptable " effort of genius and talents. The Author's name being " already on the List of Free Admissions,—the highest " honour the Committee can bestow,—they can only " add, that had they not already voted him the free- " dom of their house, the tender of such a Monody " as this would have been considered by them, as an " appropriate occasion for conferring it. — *Nov.* " 1817."

Not long after the re-opening of the Theatre, this Tragedy was placed in the hands of Mr. KEAN ; in order to ascertain, whether he would wish to perform the principal character. Mr. Kean read it immediately. and expressed himself so enthusiastically in its behalf. to Colonel Douglas and myself, that I apprehended no future obstacle.

The Tragedy had previously been inserted in the Bills, to be performed immediately :—an arrangement, which was afterwards altered, in order that the Committee might keep faith with Mr. DIMOND, the Author of the BRIDE OF ABYDOS :—a promise being, at the

same time, expressly given, that this Tragedy should immediately succeed.

The BRIDE OF ABYDOS was performed : and, understanding, that a COMEDY had been recommended by Mr. Kean to the Committee ; and, having frequently heard Colonel Douglas express an ardent wish for a good one ; I construed a casual conversation, I had with the Committee, into a distant wish, that the Comedy might precede the Tragedy. With this impression, I wrote the following letter :—

" Gentlemen,

" Understanding that a Comedy has been presented " and accepted ; and knowing your desire for a good " one to be of long standing ; and having reason to " think, that you would wish to bring it forward, as " soon as possible; I beg leave to wave the prior " claim, your politeness had assured me of; and to " express a hope, that no delicacy, on your part, may " prevent your bringing out that piece first, which may " be thought most conducive to the best interests of " the Theatre.

" In a concern of so great a magnitude, and, therefore, of responsibility, it is the duty of every one to " merge little interests, for the sake of the great one. " My Tragedy, therefore, if it is your wish, cheerfully concedes to the Comedy.—Yours, with much " respect.—*February* 4, 1818."

The Comedy was performed :—and, though recommended by Mr. Kean, who compared it to the SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL, the CASTLE OF GLENDOWER was consigned to the " Tomb of all the Capulets."

While this Comedy was in rehearsal, Mr. Kean mentioned, that he wished to bring out Marlowe's JEW OF MALTA. Many consultations were held, and the result was, that I again consented to wave my claim of priority :—the Committee and Mr. Kean entering into an express and solemn engagement, that nothing should prevent this Tragedy from appearing immediately after. At the same time, I made one important alteration, (against my own judgment), in order to harmonize with the wishes of Mr. Kean.

Towards the latter end of February I went into the country. Previous to this journey, I called at the Theatre, and requested Mr. Kean to let me take the Tragedy with me, in order, that I might revise it at my leisure. "There is no necessity for that," returned Mr. Kean; "it will now do very well. I am "perfectly satisfied with the alterations, you have "made; and any minor corrections can be attended to "during the rehearsals." I said no more;—went into the country;—staid six weeks;—and then returned. Mr. Kean, in the mean time, visited Glasgow and other parts of Scotland. On his return we had many friendly interviews; and the JEW OF MALTA soon after appeared.

Previous, however, to its appearance, I was requested, by one of the Committee, to write the Prologue. This I thought proper to decline :—first, because I felt a reluctance to be, in any way, assisting in the revival of a Tragedy, so barbarous, and so entirely unfitted for the present age, as the JEW OF MALTA: but, principally, because I felt ashamed, in being acces-

sory to the cruelty of offering such an undeserved, as well as unprovoked, insult to the great body of the Jews:—all of whom took so much offence at the representation—particularly as it occurred during the week of the Passover,—that, for the whole of the remaining season, it was more difficult to recognize a JEW in the house, than even a WOMAN OF FASHION.

Orders were now given for preparing this Tragedy. The composer had directions, relative to the music;—the scenery was put in hand;—and all was going on to my entire satisfaction;—when, one evening, that I chanced to be in the Green Room, it was hinted to me, by Mr. Kean, that "the character of Manfredi was "too much in his line;"—"that the Blind Man was "too good;"—"that the Page would excite too much "interest;"—and "that no one should write a Tra-"gedy for that House, without making the entire "interest centre in the character HE should perform." I listened to all this in silent astonishment!—The world, perhaps, will stare; and the Tragedian may possibly deny;—but if St. Peter's stand upon consecrated ground,—THIS IS THE TRUTH.

I related this curious conversation to a person, connected with the management, who replied, "that he, "and most of the performers, were well aware of the "unfortunate jealousy of Mr. Kean; and that if Miss "Kelly were to perform the character of Scipio, as I "wished, such was the interest she would excite, "that he was certain Mr. Kean would immediately "throw up his part." I mentioned this conversation

also to a literary friend of mine,* who told me, in reply, "that he had himself sent a Tragedy to the "Committee, of which Mr. Lamb was the leading "member, and a letter to Mr. Kean: who had re- "turned for answer, that unless the entire interest "centered in the character, designed for him, it would "neither suit his reputation, nor the interests of the "Theatre, that it should be accepted."

On the morning after my conversation with Mr. Kean, I received a communication from Mr. Moore; the substance of which may be gathered from the letter, I immediately wrote in reply.

"*To* PETER MOORE, *Esq. M. P.*

"Dear Sir,

"I beg to return thanks for your communication. "Mr. Kean's opinion of my Tragedy has been so ex- "pressively marked, at various times, that I feel assur- "ed, he *must* perform his character with chearfulness.

"All parties stand pledged to me, as men and as "gentlemen, to let my Tragedy succeed the JEW OF "MALTA: *and no consideration, public or private, can* "*do away an obligation, so immediate, so positive,* "*and so constantly enforced, from day to day, by* "*personal intercourse, for the period of many months.* "I know something of the critical world, and have

* Eminent in various ways!—and, if I may judge from detached passages, perhaps even destined to produce an EPIC, not unworthy of being associated with some of our first poems.

" not much fear of the result, if I am treated fairly, " justly, and honourably, by every performer's doing " his duty to the establishment and myself.

" After the time I have wasted; the expenses " I have incurred; and the hopes, by which I have " been entertained; I am sure, (from the extreme " politeness, I have always received at your hands,) " that you will excuse me, when I say, that if I am " now to be prevented exhibiting a trial of skill, it " will be a circumstance more extraordinary, than has " yet occurred in Theatrical Management; and can- " not fail, when publicly known, to have a serious " effect upon the resolutions of Literary Men in gene- " ral.*—*May* 7, 1818."

Upon the receipt of this letter, a rehearsal, in the Green Room, was immediately ordered. At this meeting the performers were desired to state any objections, that might occur to them. They pointed out a few;—unimportant and frivolous, indeed, even to a ridicule! Such as they were, however, I attended to them; and in one instance, perhaps, the Tragedy derived benefit. They had no hesitation, they said, in declaring it, as their unanimous opinion, that it

* I explained this, afterwards, by observing, that it was the unanimous opinion of my literary friends, " that if the mysterious and in- " sidious conduct, adopted towards me, were to be publicly known, " such would be the disgust and indignation of the more respectable " portion of literary men, that few pieces would be offered to the " acceptance of Drury Lane Theatre, that had not previously been re- " fused at Covent Garden."

was " a beautiful poem :" but it was difficult for any one to calculate upon success, in the present capricious state of public opinion.

Notwithstanding this liberal, and, perhaps, undeserved, concession, there was an evident distaste to the Tragedy !—This distaste the members of the Committee attributed to the *strong feeling of opposition, which had so frequently been expressed to all the measures,* THEY *had proposed, for the benefit of the Theatre.* I was desired, therefore, to take no notice of it. The Prologue and Epilogue were called for :—two highly accomplished Ladies were so polite as to promise to favour me with both :—The parts were distributed; and the scenery designed : and, assuredly, scenery more classical, or magnificent, has seldom been exhibited in any Theatre. It was a fac-simile of the BAY OF NAPLES.

For a long time, the greatest confusion had prevailed throughout the establishment. Hostilities between the Committee, the Hon. Douglas Kinnaird, the Hon. George Lamb, and the Performers, now became public ; and every day's experience more fully convinced me, that to permit my Tragedy to be performed, under such inauspicious circumstances, would be the height of superlative folly. A Nightmare seemed to sit upon the House ;—all was treason within ; and all was clamour without.

About this time, I met one of our most celebrated critics, under the Piazzas of Covent Garden. " Well !" said he, " and so Lord Yarmouth insists, that the great " tragedian of the day shall be permitted to commit

" suicide in KING JOHN." — " Where heard you " that?"—" Where you may hear every thing;—from " the transit of a planet, down to the march of a beetle " —at Sir Joseph Banks'. Your tragedy cannot appear " this season:—it is impossible. ——— and ——— " are proprietors, as well as Lord Yarmouth! They " intend being at the meeting of Proprietors, the day " after to-morrow; and design to attack his lordship, " for preventing your tragedy from being brought out. " I have given the report, all the currency I can; " and it is undulating every where."

Lord Yarmouth having always conducted himself towards me, in the politest and most gentlemanly manner, I thought proper to contradict a report, so entirely unfounded in truth. This I did in a letter addressed to the Editor of the Morning Post. In consequence of which, no allusion whatever was made to the circumstance at the meeting, and the report died of itself.

In the meantime, the house stood upon the brink of ruin:—the benches were deserted; and the treasury was losing nearly two hundred pounds every night: It was prudent, therefore, to withdraw. Previous to my leaving London, I went to the theatre; sent the actors' parts to Gloucester Place; and, having previously printed the whole, desired one of the performers to assist, in destroying the only MS. copy, that was left.

Not long after I had retired into the country, I received a letter from Mr. Moore. " I thank you " very kindly," said he, " for your letter of congratu- " lation, on the result of the election at Coventry,

" because I believe it to be sincere. In respect to " your tragedy, I regret, very grievously, that it was " ever allowed to be superseded by the JEW OF " MALTA; because, I think it would have been pro- " ductive to our treasury: whereas the Jew has not; " neither has RICHARD, DUKE OF YORK; nor KING " JOHN; nor indeed any thing, brought forward last " season by Mr. Kean. The theatre is in a strange " condition at present; but re-opened it must be. " In the present state of affairs, it is impossible to " say, who will have the selection of pieces, next " season; but if it depend upon me, your tragedy " shall, assuredly, be performed."

" *Gloucester Place, August* 15*th* 1818."

Some time after receiving this letter, I returned to London: when, dining with a gentleman, intimately connected with the establishment, I learnt, that the Committee had devolved the entire charge of selecting new pieces upon Mr. Stephen Kemble; and, that if I wished to get my tragedy performed, I should be compelled to travel the same dangerous road over again.

Upon receiving this intelligence, I called upon Mr. S. Kemble; the result of which was, that I resolved upon depending on the Committee, and the Committee alone. Mr. Moore, however, was now gone to France; and I resolved to publish: but Col. Douglas desired me, on no account, to do so till I had seen Mr. Moore.

Three months passed away, before Mr. Moore returned to London: upon his arrival, by his desire, as well as that of Col. Douglas, I wrote a letter to Mr. Kean: the following is a literal copy:

" *To* EDMUND KEAN, *Esq.*

" SIR, *Jan.* 14, 1819.

" A few days since, I enclosed to the Committee my Preface to the Tragedy of THE ITALIANS.

" I had so much trouble about this Tragedy, last season, that I had become almost indifferent, as to its being performed at Drury Lane Theatre at all. The Committee, however, seem to think, that it is pre-eminently worthy of such distinction; and that, if performed, it would be exceedingly productive to the Theatre. The Preface, I enclosed, they think, also, would have so wide and so permanent an effect, and awaken such an extraordinary sensation in the public mind, that, for the sake of all parties involved, they are desirous of preventing its publication, by having the Tragedy performed, as you and they had expressly engaged, last season.

" Thus stands the case.—The Committee wish to have it brought forward: and so, in fact, do I. But neither the Committee, nor Mr. Kemble, nor myself, would, on any account, permit it to be so, unless you will ardently and zealously enter into the subject, and perform the principal character with the chearfulness and the satisfaction, that may command a successful result.

" The subject, therefore, rests wholly with you.

" This Tragedy has, as I believe you know, been in the hands of some of the first Critics of the present day:—they tell me, it is likely to succeed on two accounts. 1st, Because there is a character, which you know so well how to render effective; and 2dly,

Because there are other characters, calculated to render your own far more interesting by the decided contrasts, they will exhibit.

" Notwithstanding this opinion, I am well aware, that no person can presume, with any degree of certainty, to foretell the actual success of any thing; either at the Theatre, or in any other of the affairs of life.

" But let the success, or nonsuccess, be as it will, this, I believe, is certain: that if the Tragedy is not acted, after the express engagements of yourself and the Committee, the operation will be far more serious, than if it is performed and condemned.

" You see, Sir, this subject is of more importance, than some superficial persons may suppose. It involves interests of the first magnitude to the establishment. I request you, therefore, to appoint either tomorrow, or Saturday, with any hour, you please, to meet me in the Committee-room, which will be appropriated to our especial service, that we may come to some final arrangement. Let us regard only the interests of the Theatre! If I can be convinced that it is for its interest, that I should quietly withdraw, I will do so; provided I can with propriety, and that just sense of feeling, which every man ought to entertain for his own fame and respectability. If, on the other hand, you feel disposed to resume your former enthusiasm, let us lose no time in consulting together, for the mutual benefit of all parties concerned.

" I am, Sir,

" Yours, &c."

To this letter I received the following answer.—

" SIR,

" I know too well my duty to a liberal public, to be instructed in my conduct towards them; nor can I bring any circumstance to my recollection, of giving any portion of that public an opportunity of accusing me, of want of ardour and zeal, in their service. I have nothing to do with the management of the theatre: if the Committee think your tragedy worthy of representation, I am the servant of the establishment, and have neither right or wish to offer any impediments; and for my own sake, shall make the most of the materials that are allotted me: further explanation on this subject is unnecessary, when the prompter sends me the character, I shall enter on its study. I am afraid in our former acquaintance, you have mistaken good wishes to you, for enthusiasm in your efforts.

" Yours, &c. &c.

" *January* 15*th*." " EDMUND KEAN."

I should have betrayed an utter ignorance of mankind, had I suffered myself to remain blind to the merits of this letter; evidently written for the purpose of publication.—As to any enthusiasm having been directed to me in person, I have only to appeal to that part of the Committee, who were in office last year.—Our manners, habits, sentiments, and opinions, too, were in such direct opposition, that it would have been impossible for Mr. KEAN to feel much for me as a friend; though I have always felt, and always ex-

pressed, a high admiration of his talents, as an actor. —Of his respect for the public, the public are far better judges, than I can pretend to be; and, if they are satisfied, I am.—But this I will say; though in saying it, I feel conscious, that I shall expose myself to the little witticisms of a thousand little musquitoes, —that every person, capable of taking a wide view of subjects in general, and who is even only superficially acquainted with the management of Drury Lane Theatre, knows, and knows well, that though Mr. KEAN is saving that establishment with his right hand, he is ruining it with his left.—No theatrical establishment can be, in the smallest degree, prosperous, where only one description of merit is allowed to exist: and no poem ought to be dignified with the name of TRAGEDY, where all the characters but one are kept below the dramatic level; merely for the purpose of giving the principal actor an opportunity of making what is vulgarly, but technically, called "a Hit."

Upon the receipt of Mr. Kean's letter, I paused:—for the more active portion of the Committee were by no means satisfied with it;—nor could I make up my mind, whether there would be an attempt to save or condemn.—In the meantime Miss Porter's Tragedy was in rehearsal; and as Mr. Kean was said to entertain a personal dislike of that lady, on account of some proceedings, which took place, last season, it was deemed prudent, on the part of the Committee, to proceed no farther in my affair, till the fate of that Tragedy should be decided.—What that fate was, will

best be shewn by the following extract from the Morning Herald.—

" *Feb.* 15. A new tragedy, entitled *Switzerland*, " was produced last night. It is the production of Miss " Porter, who has attained not only success, but " celebrity in the different walks of domestic and " heroic novel writing. Its reception was such, that " it will not be performed a second time; we will not, " therefore, enter into the fable, which, moreover, it " would have been extremely difficult to seize with " accuracy, from the uproar that frequently prevailed " during the performance. Miss Porter's tragedy was " certainly ill-adapted for the stage; but it will be " some consolation to her to know, that the noblest " piece of Sophocles or Shakespeare,* if represented " like her play, would meet the same destiny. It " would seem, as if the whole theatre had conspired " against it, even to the scene-shifters. Two scenes " fell flat upon the stage during the performance, and " presented a strangely confused spectacle of back " lights, naked machinery, and more than the bustle " of a ship's deck in a storm. But the greatest out- " rage was the behaviour of Mr. KEAN. He went " through his part, of course the principal one by many

* One portion of the public do not seem to have the slightest idea, that the success of a piece depends nearly as much upon the *acting*, as the *writing!* and one description of writers seem to think, that if an actor does not like his part, he is justified in sacrificing the interests of his employers, to his ambition or caprice.—These writers, in their puerile admiration of talent, seem to lose all regard to property; and all respect to feeling.—Truly may it be said, that though we live in an *age of critics*, we are far from living in a *critical age*.

" degrees, with as much slovenliness, as if he was " merely rehearsing it. This was so palpable, that " persons cried ' shame ! ' upon him from the pit.

" We shall leave this conduct between him and the " public, or rather between him and his audiences, " without observation. He knows them better than we " do; and perhaps judges with more justness to what " degree of deference, they are entitled. The part " was certainly not as good as others, in which he " plays, but in the hands of a performer, able and wil- " ling to give it fair effect, it would have been inter- " esting.

" There were descriptive and narrative passages, " susceptible of being brought out with great force; " and a scene in a dungeon between him and Mrs. " West gave scope to talent of the first order.—Ac- " cordingly Mrs. West, in spite of the cold and care- " less manner of Mr. Kean, which greatly detracted " from her efforts, was much applauded for bursts of " strong and true passion."*

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* The following observations are extracted from the CHAMPION.

" Miss PORTER's new tragedy, *Switzerland*.—As for KEAN's perfor- " mance of what should have been the hero—perhaps a greater insult " was never offered to an indulgent audience—or a more unqualified " abuse of the prerogative of favouritism. We have it, from unde- " niable authority, that Miss PORTER affirms that scarcely any part of " her language was by him delivered: that he spoke, as it were, what " came uppermost; and it is even added, that Mrs. GLOVER complained, " that his inaccuracy perpetually put her out. Whether this be true, to " its full extent, we do not pretend to answer; but there was certainly " throughout the whole, all the embarrassment of an imperfect rehear- " sal. The public, it seems, have shewn some part of their sense of

I was present at this unequalled scene.—As soon as the Play was over, I went round to the other part of the Theatre, to speak to Mr. Moore.—I found him in the Anti-Committee-Room, conversing with a Gentleman, whom I found afterwards to be a Friend of Miss Jane Porter.—"Well," said Mr. Moore, "what think you of this?"—"The only reply, I can give you, "sir," said I, "is, that I *withdraw my tragedy im-* "*mediately*."

On the next day, I called upon the Manager; and withdrew the Copy. On Thursday I waited upon Mr. Moore, at his house in Gloucester Place, and upon Col. Douglas in York Place, Baker Street; where I read to them the following Letter.

"Mr. Kean's conduct on this occasion, by leaving him to play *Hamlet* "to empty benches:—but we must speak out a little more plainly. The "interests of the proprietors—and what is more, of the drama,—must "not be sacrificed, with impunity, to the whims and caprices of any "man. Mr. K. it is true, for the want of a better, stands at the very "head of his profession; and if he enjoyed his eminence with discre- "tion, we should be happy to swell the chorus of his reputation. But "if he will suffer no other merit, among actors, to appear beside him on "the boards; no production of authors to be accepted or to succeed, "that does not make his character *the exclusive object of attraction;* "and no wish or promise of managers to be fulfilled, that does not chime "in with his ambition to shine, not only superior, *but alone*, it is high "time for criticism to look to the other side of the picture: and Mr. K. "may assure himself, that there are still faults enough to be pointed out "in his elocution and acting, to place, without discolouring or exagge- "ration, even his very best characters in a much less favourable point "of view, than they have generally been regarded by an indulgent "public."

" *To the Committee of Drury Lane Theatre.*

" GENTLEMEN,

" When you were pleased to accept my Tragedy, you promised to bring it forward immediately, and to support it with the whole strength of the Theatre. Mr. KEAN, too, promised me the best assistance of his powerful talents.

" This pledge, I understand, is now at last about to be redeemed.—The redemption comes too late !

" The scene witnessed, the other evening, at the representation of Miss JANE PORTER's Tragedy, can never be forgotten. It forms an epoch in Theatrical History : and the name of Mr. KEAN must ever be pronounced, with indignation, by all admirers of those prides of civilized life,—elegant and accomplished women.

" The conduct of Mr. KEAN, on that occasion, exhibited such a contemptuous disregard to the common decencies of society, that I scorn to be in any way obliged to him !

" Miss JANE PORTER is nothing to me :—I only remember having once passed a very agreeable evening in her society :—that is all the personal knowledge, I have of her : but her character is well known to be estimable ; and her talents, as a writer, are universally acknowledged. That she has not been able to write a Tragedy is no great matter of disgrace ; seeing that the Art appears to be entirely lost.—But to wound,—deliberately,—the feelings of such a Woman, and that, too, before one of the most brilliant audiences, ever assembled at a Theatre, surely could not have proceeded from a man of courage !—It is,

indeed, so gross, that language is powerless, when it would presume to visit it with commensurate condemnation.

"You may, Gentlemen, continue to suffer the establishment of Drury Lane Theatre to become a martyr to Mr Kean's ambition and caprice, if you please;—I shall have nothing more to do with him!—Therefore, with every sentiment of respect towards you, individually, I beg leave to withdraw my Tragedy of the ITALIANS entirely from the Stage.

"I am, Gentlemen, &c. &c."

"*Feb.* 18, 1819."

Upon reading this letter, Mr. MOORE requested me to call at the Theatre, the next day. This I accordingly did; and understanding that the Committee were engaged in conversing with the Manager, having no great cause to expect any thing from an interview, I requested COLONEL DOUGLAS to lose no time in presenting my letter to the Committee:—and having done so, I returned home, without waiting for any reply.

And now,—liberal and gentle reader,—let me presume to bespeak your favour, not only for the tragedy in general, but for the characters of *Albanio* and *Scipio* in particular. The plot was an exceedingly difficult one to arrange: since it exhibits three groupes of characters, all involved in the same interest, and all depending on the same result. It is managed, also, in such a manner, that, I believe, the catastrophe

is never once foreseen. As to the language, conduct, and sentiments, they must be tried by the acknowledged laws of good taste; I leave them, therefore, to the indulgence of the critical reader. But for the characters of ALBANIO and SCIPIO, I claim, with all their faults, the merit of an entire originality. That of SCIPIO I leave to speak for itself:—but that of ALBANIO having experienced some opposition in the Green Room, I think proper to observe, that I refused to turn him, either into a MANIAC or a MONSTER! Having, in the first instance, designed to exhibit a noble mind, partially in ruins, I could not permit myself, so far to forget all propriety of keeping, as to draw him in the conclusion, *savage*, *relentless*, and *remorseless!*

Nothing could have been more easy, than to have executed this. But what a solecism in characteristics! and what a barbarism in taste! The character would have lost what little interest it possesses; nature would have been outraged; and the harmony of the whole entirely destroyed.

Some ACTORS regard nothing but the opportunity of displaying their own peculiar talent; and having only a knowledge of stage effect, they are weak enough to suppose, that stage effect necessarily embraces plot, character, and sentiment; and that it ought to be the beginning, the middle, and the end, of dramatic composition.*

* Nothing surprised me more, during my occasional visits to the Theatre, than to observe the utter CONTEMPT,—I had almost said

When a COMEDY, or an OPERA, is announced for performance, there is little comparative sympathy in the public mind. But, on the announcement of a TRAGEDY, there is a vibration of interest, from one end of the town to the other. Who can presume to brave an ordeal, such expectation implies, without a strong sensation of awe?—None but the vainest, or most impudent of mankind!—For to exhibit a Tragedy is to summon many of the best, wisest, and most celebrated men of a country, to witness a contention between glory and defeat.

A good TRAGEDY, in all enlightened ages, has been esteemed, next to an EPIC, the most difficult of all mental operations;—from the time of Aristotle to that of Quintilian;—thence to the days of Longinus; and lastly to those of Johnson, Beattie, and Blair. To aim at tragic distinction, therefore, is a presumption of no ordinary stamp;—and I bend before the reflection, such a sentiment naturally implies. But, having once commanded the courage to write one, is it to be endured, as a recompense for exertion, that men—wholly insensible to the finer operations of the

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HORROR,—with which any thing like POETRY was alluded to.—"Stage "effect, sir;—Stage effect:—nothing will do but Stage effect!—God "help the man, that writes Poetry for the Stage! for even the critics "will tolerate nothing but stage effect."

Stage effect is, assuredly, solicitously to be attended to. Its effect upon the vulgar is undeniable. And yet I cannot refrain from thinking, that an overweening desire of administering to this puerile appetite,—so foreign to the national character,—has contributed, in no slight degree, to the present degraded state of the Drama; and, therefore, to the effect of saddling this Theatre with a debt of more than £80,000.

mind—shall presume *officially* to assert, that, with success upon the stage, good writing has little or nothing to do?—Is it to be endured, that, to conciliate the duty of a favourite performer, tragedy must be martyrized into a MONODRAME?—or is it to be endured, that, for the sake of conciliating the least enlightened part of an audience, the most delicate touches of character, and the finest meltings of the heart, are to be tortured into EXTRAVAGANCE, or degraded into PANTOMIME?

To aspire with humility is the privilege of us all.—I have exercised my birthright.—Should I succeed, Ambition will be satisfied;—and should I fail!—What is the utmost, a WISE MAN will suffer himself to say?—That I have dared to aspire; but that I have been wronged:—the result has been unfavourable; but it is a result easily to be anticipated in an ART, which the world is unanimous in believing is almost totally EXTINCT.

C. B.

London.

PREFACE

TO THE

THIRD EDITION.

IMMEDIATELY upon the publication of this Tragedy, so great a sensation was excited in the public mind, that Mr. KEAN was obliged immediately to reply.

If the indignation of the public had been excited, in the first instance,—to describe the disgust, which pervaded all ranks of society, upon the appearance of his letter, in the morning and evening papers, would be impossible! It was conceived and written in a manner so entirely beyond all precedent, that it is literally impossible, I can consent to degrade these pages with it. I am writing at a moment, in which that letter is in the vivid recollection of the public, and that public will, no doubt, appreciate the value of the omission to the future fame and almost entire existence of Mr. KEAN.

The following was the reply, I sent to the Editors of the morning and evening papers.

"SIR—Observing a letter in your paper of this morning, signed EDMUND KEAN, I beg leave to state, that I shall wait a short time to see whether it was written by MR. KEAN or not. I have still too good an opinion of MR. KEAN to suppose that it was. It is impossible that such language can have proceeded from the first TRAGEDIAN of the day. If, after two or three days, MR. KEAN does not disown it, I shall naturally con

clude that he *did* write it; and answer it in a manner, I hope, at least, worthy a gentleman to write, and a gentleman to read."

"*March* 18*th*, 1819."

No disavowal appearing in the papers on the Saturday, I thought it my duty to reply without another day's delay.

"SIR—Mr. KEAN has not disowned the letter; I am, therefore, reluctantly obliged to believe, that it emanated from himself; rather than from one of those enemies, who, conscious of their own insignificance, are ever active in their malice against celebrated characters. In fact, I really thought, that some one had assumed Mr. KEAN's name, for the purpose of doing him the short and little injury of a day;—instead of which it appears to be his own;—and the injury must last for years!

"Circumstantial evidence, Mr. EDITOR, is, sometimes, far better than positive. Mr. KEAN knows,—and every one must know,—that I cannot, by any association, have *positive* proof of what passed, many months ago, in *private* conversation. But the following extract from a newspaper of this day furnishes such a fortunate commentary on my text, that, I think, no argument will be esteemed necessary to prove, at least, the *probability* of my statement.

"I have stated in the preface to *the Italians*, that a gentleman having sent a letter, relative to a Tragedy he had written, to Mr. KEAN, Mr. KEAN returned for answer, that unless the entire interest centered in the character designed for him, *it would neither suit his reputation nor the interests of the Theatre, that it should*

be accepted. This assertion Mr. KEAN *denies*; and yet it does most unfortunately happen, that the very gentleman, who told me this, has, in a journal of this day* given the following statement.

'The letter sent to Mr. KEAN indicated, that there 'were two characters in the piece, as it then stood, 'either of which might be so written up, as to render it 'the principal; and Mr. KEAN was requested to say 'which of the two he would prefer, that it might be 'altered accordingly. Mr. KEAN, *without waiting to see 'the MS.*, wrote back, '*unless the character allotted to 'me is the chief object of the Play, it will not be consis-'tent with my reputation, or the interest of Drury Lane 'Theatre, to accept it.*' Now the *chief object* was to 'make a good Play; and the story required, that the 'three female and two of the male characters, should 'be such as would require good acting; though the au-'thor was prepared to give conspicuous prominence to 'which-ever of the latter Mr. KEAN might most affect.

"If, after this confirmation of what I have asserted in one instance, Mr. KEAN should still deny the substance of our converations, I shall think myself justified,—much against my will,—in putting him to a test from which his better judgment must recoil. And yet, surely the man, who is not to be believed upon his word, is not to be believed upon his *oath!*

"Hitherto, in the midst of many difficulties and injuries, I have been fortunate enough to command a considerable portion of personal respect; and I am proud

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* The Champion.

to say, that—to the best of my belief,—I have never lost a single FRIEND. But I give public notice to all my friends,—numerous and respectable as they are,—that I shall have a contempt for any one of them, who may, hereafter, shake me by the hand, if I do not come successfully out of this controversy. And I now call upon the more active portion of the SUB-COMMITTEE of last year, not only to lose all friendship for me, as a man, but, for the sake of public justice,—for the interests of the Proprietors of the Theatre,—and out of respect to the acknowledged talents of Mr. KEAN,—I call upon them instantly to come forward and convict me publicly of a falsehood, if I am wrong in stating; that Mr. KEAN, previous to his journey into Scotland, gave a distinct and positive pledge, that nothing on his part should prevent my Tragedy from succeeding *The Jew of Malta*;—and that too, *without any reference to compassion.**

"That Mr. MOORE, when he found the conduct of Mr. KEAN was operating to my disadvantage, might, *two or three months afterwards*, plead the great expenses I had been put to, and the loss of time and money I should sustain; if,—after the solemn pledges that had been given,—my Tragedy should not be performed, is very possible. For having long been in the habit of reading SENECA and BOETHIUS, I felt no shame in confessing to Mr. MOORE;—nor do I now in publicly confessing to the world,—that, from several persons not keeping their engagements with me, my truly excel-

* Mr. KEAN modestly says, "Mr. P. Moore excited with some ability my personal compassion for Mr. BUCKE; in consequence of which I undertook to act in his play."

lent wife, my children and myself were, for the time, in great comparative want!

"From the second month of my marriage, up to the moment in which I am writing, I have been visited with such a series of afflictions, as are, I think, scarcely to be paralleled in the annals of private life!—But I am too proud to excite even the sympathy of the public; much less the *compassion* of Mr. KEAN. I am, also, too sensible of the beautiful advantages of adversity to repine;—though it would be miraculous, did I not sometimes feel impatience and disgust.

"Mr. KEAN, I understand, is occasionally in the habit of doing generous actions to persons of his own profession; but, for him to presume to the consequence of exercising compassion towards me would have been a subject for my ridicule, were I not so far advanced in the knowledge of human nature to know, that *ridicule is the weapon of degenerate minds.*

"By the more active portion of the Sub-Committee, I, of course, mean PETER MOORE, Esq. Member for Coventry, and Colonel DOUGLAS, of York Place, Baker-street. These gentlemen are of high consideration in the country, and I call upon them, as Men, and as Gentlemen, to do that justice to Mr. KEAN, which I should wish, were I placed in Mr. KEAN's situation, to have administered to myself. *Should they be silent,—their silence must, of course, be construed to my benefit.*

"Mr. KEAN states, in his unfortunate letter, that when he read my *worst of all bad Tragedies*, the only feelings it excited among the performers were *uncontrollable laughter*! Now, this is either a curious fact, or an

alarming accusation. I am, therefore, resolved, that the public shall know the actual truth or untruth of this assertion; and I call upon Mr. RAE, Mr. POPE, and Mrs. GLOVER,* to state, *publicly*, in *a body*, and *with as little delay as possible*, whether they did, or did not, commit that most disgraceful *outrage* on private feeling, of which Mr. KEAN so roundly has accused them! If they did, the world will have a sure criterion by which to judge of *them;* if they did not, something better than my assertions will be afforded to the world, by which they may judge the veracity of Mr. KEAN."

"*March* 21, 1819."

My answer appeared in most of the Morning Papers of Monday, March 22d. It brought the public mind to a climax of indignation, beyond any thing of the kind, that had ever been known in the annals of Theatrical experience! In the park,—in the drawing rooms of the nobility and the wealthy,—and in the parlours, devoted to the comforts of the less elevated portion of society,—a sympathy was awakened; such as it must ever delight my soul to remember; and such as my children must, hereafter, rest upon with satisfaction and delight. Mr. KEAN was called upon to make an immediate apology to that public, who were pleased to conceive itself insulted by the injury I had sustained; and by the outrage, that had been offered to my feelings.

An apology was made!

This apology, in the estimation of many persons, was

* The excellent Mrs. BARTLEY and Mr. WALLACK are in America; but I request them to take the earliest opportunity of favouring me with their testimony likewise.

not deemed sufficiently explicit;—an opposition, therefore, to the proceeding in the tragedy of Brutus manifested itself on Mr. KEAN's appearance on the following night. The account of this transaction, published in the Morning Herald, will give this part of my subject an authenticity, of which I willingly avail myself.

"A strong disposition to compel MR. KEAN to make a more ample apology to the public, and to the author of *The Italians*, was manifested in several parts of the house, last night, at the rising of the curtain. It was not, however, persevered in; and it gradually subsided into a few murmurs, which were heard, from time to time, during the performance. In candour and justice we must confess, that, in our humble opinion, MR. KEAN's apology was sufficient; so far as it regarded the insult, which he offered to the public, in the publication of his letter. As to the insult, which he has given to the literature of the country, by his whole conduct towards MR. BUCKE, no apology should be demanded for it;—because none can be adequate.

"To men of literary talent, and of that high spirit, to which eminent talent is a natural and a becoming appendage, we have one advice to give—'never write for Drury-Lane Theatre, so long as the present system continues; you but waste your noble energies; and subject yourselves not only to disappointment, but to insult.'

"It has been suggested to us, that if matters were managed in a conciliating tone, MR. KEAN might give *The Italians* a trial before the public. In the first place, we do not believe, that MR. KEAN is possessed of the magnanimity to offer such an atone-

ment to the author. In the next place, we are authorised to say, *that if he did offer it, the author would not accept it.*

"For the rest, the public will be pleased to bear in mind, that Mr. Bucke's letter still remains unanswered. All points in that letter must, therefore, be considered as matters of authentic and true record; because the persons, most interested, have not proved the contrary.

"If any one doubt the merit of this author's tragedy, he has only to read it; and he will find that the beauty and simplicity of the poetry,—the great moral purpose of the catastrophe,—the originality and strength of the principal characters,—as well as their variety, and,—above all,—their aptitude for dramatic representation, would, in all probability, have crowned *The Italians* with perfect success on the stage. In the closet it will survive, at least, the memory of Mr. Kean."

It would seem to betray a want of feeling, on my part, if I did not take this opportunity of endeavouring to express the gratitude of my heart to the public in general, and my private friends in particular, for the unexampled interest, that has been exercised in my favour. But what *can* I say?—Language has power to describe all the *material* objects of the Universe: but it has neither power nor influence to depict those delicate and delightful emotions, which all can feel, and all imagine; but which the powers even of Milton himself were inadequate to describe!

C. B.

London, March 24, 1819.

PREFACE

TO THE

SIXTH EDITION.

A FEW days after the appearance of my letter in answer to Mr. Kean, to the great astonishment of all persons, who took any interest in the subject, the tragedy was announced for performance at Drury Lane Theatre, on the evening of April the 3d. Upon the receipt of this intelligence I wrote the following letter to Mr. Stephen Kemble.

" SIR,

" Observing in the bills of the theatre, that you have without any consultation with me informed the public, that my tragedy of *the Italians* will be represented at Drury Lane Theatre, on Saturday April 3, I take this opportunity of requesting, that you will do me the favour of withdrawing that statement from the bills at your earliest convenience. When my tragedy was accepted, I was promised that it should command the whole strength of the theatre; and the best of all authorities assured me, that Mr. Kean had never in a new tragedy seen a character he liked half so well as that, which I designed for him. Circumstances have now altered the whole complexion of the case; and Mr. Kean can no more offer,—nor can I any more accept—the powerful aid, which his unequalled conception would have afforded me. I therefore court retirement, both for myself and my Tragedy. If, after all the mysterious hostility it has encountered, it should at last prove worthy of life, the satisfaction of having given it existence will of itself be a sufficient reward. If, on the other hand, it should prove unworthy the silent sympathy of the closet, it will die without any assistance from its enemies."

To this letter I received the following answer.

" Dear Sir,

" Mr. Carr at my desire waited upon you yesterday, and again this morning, but was not so fortunate as to meet with you at home. I have presented your note to the gentlemen of the sub-committee: it is their opinion that your play should be performed; and I promise you that every pains will be taken with the acting of it. Mr. Rae has undertaken Mr. Kean's character, and the others will be done to the utmost strength of the company. We should be happy if you would favour us with your company at the rehearsals, at eleven o'clock every morning, till it is acted: perhaps you would favour us with a prologue and epilogue? which if you would do, I should esteem it a particular kindness; at all events pray rest assured, that every possible justice shall be done the tragedy.

" I am, dear Sir,

" Your obedient servant,

" S. KEMBLE,

" *To Cha. Bucke, Esq.*" " *March* 27, 1819."

Finding by this letter, that the committee were resolved upon performance, I thought proper to make a merit of necessity, and therefore attended the few rehearsals that were allowed. I also made several curtailments and alterations, in order to meet the interests of the Theatre. These alterations, however, I do not in any way acknowledge to have been for the better.—The printed copy is the only one, I acknowledge as legitimate.

It will not be expected, that I should give a detailed account of the proceedings at the eventful exhibition which ensued. I shall, therefore, make a few extracts from the journals, by which the reader will be enabled, in some measure, to form an accurate conception of the interest the tragedy had excited, and the manner in which it was received.

In respect to the moral argument, the *Times** newspaper was obliged to acknowledge that "the town espoused the part of the author;" that "the play became the leading topic in all the fashionable circles;" and that "it ran through five editions in as many weeks." Indeed the curiosity of the public to see the tragedy, and to witness the expected contention, was such, that so numerous an audience had "never before been assembled at a theatre since the destruction of the Coliseum at Rome."†

The following is extracted from the *Sun* newspaper of April 5.

"We have to record one of the most disgraceful scenes, that ever occurred in a place devoted to a public and a rational amusement. The tragedy of *The Italians*, which has so much excited

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* The criticism of this paper, which was copied almost *verbatim* into the COURIER and other papers, was decidedly unfavourable. — It was no doubt an honest criticism: but it would have come with more grace, and with more appearance of impartiality, had not the Editor of that paper given insertion to Mr. Kean's letter, and refused to insert my answer in return.—To this fact I have a competent witness: I hope, therefore, no attempt will be made to deny it. The unexampled influence of this country may chiefly be attributed to the freedom of its press. But the press, as it is used, may be a nuisance, as well as a blessing. When a journalist so far forgets his duty to society, as to admit into his columns an accusation, and then refuses to give equal facility to the accused to publish his defence, he stands convicted before God and Man of being a party in the calumny. I signed my name, and gave my place of abode, to the letter I sent to the Editor of the Times. He could have no reasonable excuse, therefore, for refusing to do an act of justice to a man, already sufficiently loaded with injuries.

† I am not prepared to support this assertion; but a gentleman, to whom, though a stranger, I am under considerable obligations, has requested me to hazard the assertion on his authority; in order that he may obtain data for the correction of an essay, that he is writing, on the subject of theatrical audiences, should the assertion be found, upon minute enquiry, to be substantially incorrect.

public notice, and the author of which has been so unjustly treated, was announced for representation on Saturday last; and the house was thronged in all quarters, partly from a general desire of witnessing its fate, and partly from a sense of justice, to rescue the work from the malevolence of faction. That faction, we have no hesitation in saying, we conceive to have consisted solely of the besotted admirers of Mr. Kean, who can see no merit in any other performer; and who are resolved that all other talents shall be sacrificed at the shrine of their idol. The folly of theatrical proprietors, in erecting such enormous theatres, has nearly occasioned the ruin of the regular drama, and deprived the public of power to prevent the malevolence of party from accomplishing its purpose; whether to force nonsense on the town, or to crush the works of real genius, when unsuitable to its views."

"From the rising up of the curtain," says the *Herald*, "there were ample proofs of the presence of a large and well organized party, perfectly versed in the science of mockery, and sufficiently vulgar to give the loud laugh, the ironical yell, and the affected scream their fullest effect. Men, whom no poetry could improve, no eloquence enkindle, to whom beauty was an object of contempt, and sublimity of ridicule, were packed together like so many *wolves*, to affright by fierceness what they would not dare to meet in fair contest. These persons were manifestly the admirers of Mr. Kean. There was another large body,—the enemies of the performers *en masse*. This part of the audience having come to the house with an expectation, that the tragedy would have little professional support, were nearly as active in producing a result, they did not wish, as the party to which they were by principle opposed. The third party consisted of the friends of the author. These were the more genteel and respectable portion of the audience; and though persons of that class are seldom noisy, and never clamorous, this party exerted themselves in a manner never before witnessed in the dress circles.

The ladies were few in number, but they were not neutrals; they waved their handkerchiefs, and clapped their light hands even to fatigue, in support of the author."

The *low* party gained the victory; as it always does and always must, in cases of a similar nature.—When I say the *low* party, I do not mean the lowly in condition, but the debased in mind:—for the tenants of the galleries were as much my friends as the nobility and gentry in the boxes, and all the more respectable persons in the pit;—particularly on the second night. There is a love of justice in the less elevated orders of this country truly astonishing, when we consider the few advantages they possess!—And those, who pride themselves upon their superior manners and acquirements, may often learn maxims for the regulation of their passions and their judgments, valuable in the highest degree, from men, whom the ignorance of their vanity would induce them to despise.—By the low party, I mean that order of society, who, to a little shrewdness, add a little knowledge; and who to no small portion of worldly cunning, unite a large portion of personal vanity and vulgar consequence.——This is the only order of men, in this country, who *could* have stooped so low, as to condemn a tragedy without hearing it!

The issue between the contending parties was a determination, on the part of the management, that the Tragedy should have another trial on Easter Monday! Whether the evening of that day was selected out of friendship or hostility, I shall not presume to enquire.—It is sufficient to state, that I protested against it with much earnestness;—and without success.

On the morning after performance I gratified one of the most delightful of all human feelings, by writing the following letter to the editors of the morning papers.

" Sir,

" I beg leave, through the medium of your journal, to return my ardent and most grateful thanks to the nobility, gentry, and all the more respectable portion of the audience of last night, for their warm and active support during the unprecedented attack upon my tragedy of The Italians.

" Hoping you will not deny me the satisfaction of thus signalizing my gratitude, I remain, Sir, &c. &c."

This letter, as I had clearly anticipated, gave great offence to those, who felt conscious how little they enjoyed the common sympathies of human nature. Men, whom it is an honour to offend ; and a grace and a virtue to shun and to despise.

The bills of the Theatre gave notice that my tragedy was again to suffer martyrdom on Easter Monday. Not having been successful in my former appeal to Mr. S. Kemble, to prevent a first performance, I wrote to Mr. Ward, the secretary of the committee, to prevent a second.—This appeal was equally unsuccessful.

On the morning of performance the following paragraph appeared in one or two of the morning papers.

" It is but justice to Mr. Bucke to state a few of the obstacles, his tragedy will have to encounter during this evening's performance. 1st. It will be represented on a night proverbially noisy and clamorous. 2dly. The principal characters will be supported by persons, for whom they were never intended. 3dly. It will have to encounter the active hostility of the partizans of Mr. Kean ; the enemies of the performers *en masse* ; the enemies of the establishment ; and " though last not least " the ignorance and vulgarity of that numerous order of persons, who, without possessing one single idea of their own, go to a theatre for the express purpose of making a riot. Indeed we must say,

that we are much concerned, that this tragedy should have been performed at all, under circumstances so decidedly unfavourable. The author has protested against it from the beginning; and among his private friends, we understand, frequently gives way to a calm sense of injury at the manner, in which his literary interests have been sported with."

Part of the following history of the second representation is taken from the HERALD.—

"Sentence was last night pronounced, as far as this theatre is concerned, on Mr. Bucke's tragedy. We were about to write *judgment* has been pronounced; but that would have implied that the condemned had been heard, which certainly is not the case in this instance. Those of our readers, who have perused the work, have doubtless, ere this, formed their opinion upon it as a composition; and therefore, we shall not now enter into a critique upon it; but, unquestionably, the play has not been heard by the public in the theatre, and we should be inclined, were we in the author's place, to look upon the decision of last night—

"If decision it might be call'd, which decision was not,"

rather as a triumph than a defeat. The audience may fairly be classed as follows:—The first and second tier of boxes, this evening, appeared neuter: the galleries were both decidedly for fair play, and hearing the piece, as their peltings at the pit, and their cries of "shame!" directed towards that quarter, sufficiently proved. The pit, therefore, may be said to have contained the whole of the malcontents, and even there it was very doubtful whether they had the majority.* Besides, the agitators have always the advantage on these occasions, for the disapprobation directed against themselves, and the general clamour thereby excited, all pass in condemnation of the piece.

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* The Courier says, there were five to one in my favour.

" The house, last night, was not much more than half filled, even at second price ; and a very small proportion of the audience was of the fair sex; the howlings of *wolves*,* indeed, and the beating of benches, cannot be supposed to be much to their taste ; and their absence may readily be accounted for. Before the commencement of the play, every thing was tolerably quiet, except the customary impatience of the galleries for music ; and when at length the curtain rose, Mr. Stephen Kemble immediately came forward, and after a discordant shout of some seconds had subsided, apologized for his absence on the preceding night; after which he addressed the audience in the following manner :

" Ladies and Gentlemen,—The Tragedy which is now about to " be performed, having been much admired in the closet, the " management of this theatre thought it their duty to produce " it on the stage ;—in fact, it was called for by the public voice.

" That it has not been brought out with the whole strength of " the theatre, as was originally promised to the author, is certainly a subject of regret; but I ardently hope, for the interests of most parties concerned, that the causes which have " led to so much angry discussion, will, one day, be removed; " and that the controversy which has arisen out of them will be " entirely buried in oblivion.

" Animated by this hope, Ladies and Gentlemen, I presume " to bespeak your fair, candid, and patient hearing. Opposition to a new piece, previous to its commencement, or during " the progress of its performance, is so peculiarly embarrassing " to performers, that it renders them almost entirely incapable " of doing justice to the public, to the author, or to themselves. " Mistakes occurred on the last evening of performance, which

* The name of a club, to which Mr. Kean belongs.

" we confidently hope will not occur on this. Performers, " Ladies and Gentlemen, are persons following an arduous pro- " fession; and the only reward, that can reconcile them to its " difficulties, is the approbation of the public, whose servants " they are. This approbation they hope, this night, to obtain. " All they are able to do will be done; (*laughter and hissing*;) " and they confidently hope, that in this their endeavour to do " justice to the author, a British audience will not refuse to " afford them indulgence and support."

Thus far the *Herald*.—The address, in some measure, produced the effect desired.—The first act was heard with few interruptions. —The second was received in a still more favourable manner; and in the third, both the performers and the piece seemed to have gained almost entire possession of the house.*—At the commencement of the fourth act, however, sounds which had not been heard before burst from many parts of the theatre:—sounds, which clearly indicated that a well organized party had entered during the time of half-price.—Indeed this party poured in, as I am given to understand, by " dozens."—These sounds were partial in the first instance; but at the delivery of the following passage, the grand attack was made; and scarcely a sentence could be afterwards heard in any part of the house.

" O thou Eternal Father of the World!
" Upon whose mercy I've relied so long, &c. &c." †

" This opposition," says the *Herald*, " though determined, was very evidently confined to a few. There appeared to be a

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* The Sun says, " The three first acts were heard with much applause; but on the entrance of the party at half-price, &c. &c."

† It ought here to be observed, that these lines are, by far, the best in the whole tragedy.

junto in one of the side slips, who were incessantly giving the signal for uproar by every species of noise; and a young fellow, with a broad-brimmed hat, was the declared leader of a posse of critics, forsooth! who all stood on the benches around him, yelling through their hands, whenever he set them the example. In the last scene the uproar was increased; the whole pit, both friends and enemies, rising simultaneously, some applauding and some yelling, but unquestionably the applause predominated. Amidst this uproar the curtain fell; and Mr. Stephen Kemble again came forward; but the confusion of the contest in the pit, and the cries of "shame!" from every other part of the house, made it impossible for him to be heard. At length, a placard was displayed in front of the lower gallery, with the words—"Will "Englishmen allow an insolent faction to dictate to them?" It was received with acclamation; and in a few seconds was dropped into the pit; and falling among the party of yellers, headed by their leader, before-mentioned, it was immediately torn in pieces. Whilst this was passing, Mr. Kemble had retired without having been heard; and after much further clamour, the curtain rose, and discovered, placed against the drop-scene, a large board, on which was chalked, "*The Italians is withdrawn.*" The confusion was instantly renewed tenfold; loud cries of "Shame! shame!" re-echoed from all sides, mingled with shouts of "Bravo!" &c. The audience were now left to enjoy this scene, for more than three quarters of an hour; before the afterpiece commenced; and when at length it did begin, not a single word of it was heard. It was gone through merely in dumb show, and was closed at last in an imperfect manner. A considerable number of persons remained in the house for more than an hour afterwards; and the pit continued their thunders, although the constables were several times introduced, and though some of the *gods* repeatedly threw large quantities of water over them. From this latter attack, they defended themselves with umbrellas, and appeared determined to proceed to greater extremities; but at

length, towards half-past eleven o'clock, they gradually dispersed." *

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* *Théâtre de Drury-Lane.*—On a représenté Samedi, le 3 Avril, sur ce théâtre une nouvelle tragédie intitulée "THE ITALIANS." Son auteur, M. Bucke, ayant eu à se plaindre des procédés de M. Kean, qui devoit y jouer le principal rôle, avoit retiré sa pièce du théâtre et l'avoit publiée. Cinq éditions avoient été épuisées en deux ou trois semaines. Il avoit, dans une préface, exposé ses motifs de mécontentement, et M. Kean ayant inséré dans les journaux une lettre peu mesurée, très-arrogante, et contenant une censure amère de la tragédie et de l'auteur, il s'étoit établi ainsi une contestation, à laquelle le public avoit pris un certain degré d'intérêt. L'auteur, jusqu'alors peu connu, avoit pour défenseurs tous les écrivains qui croyoient voir en lui un de leurs confrères opprimé; l'acteur étoit soutenu par de nombreux admirateurs de son talent. Le comité d'administration, voyant la querelle vivement engagée, a cru que l'occasion étoit favorable pour faire au moins une bonne recette ou deux, et il s'est décidé à faire jouer la pièce, malgré les remontrances de l'auteur. La représentation a donc eu lieu Samedi. Depuis long-temps on n'en avoit point vu d'aussi orageuse. Les loges étoient retenues depuis plus d'une semaine; et la foule qui s'étoit portée aux portes du théâtre étoit si nombreuse, que peu de minutes après l'ouverture des portes toutes les parties de la salle et même les corridors ont été remplis. M. Kean étoit parti le Jeudi précédent pour l'Ecosse. Mais ses partisans n'ont pas montré moins de zèle pour sa cause que s'ils eussent été animés par sa présence. La pièce a commencé sans prologue ni adresse préalable; et cette déviation de l'usage a fait éclater les premiers murmures. Un acteur est venu annoncer que l'auteur avoit écrit un prologue, mais qu'on lui avoit conseillé de le supprimer, parce qu'il contenoit simplement un appel à l'indulgence de l'assemblée. Les deux premiers actes ont été écoutés tranquillement,

Now I have no hesitation in stating it to be my calm, fixed, and decided opinion, that, let the demerits of this Tragedy be

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et même des applaudissemens ont été donnés à plusieurs scènes. Mais au troisième acte, les interruptions ont commencé et elles se sont succédées jusqu'à la fin. Les derniers actes n'ont été qu'une scène continuelle de confusion, de cris et de huées, *qui manifestoient assez la détermination de condamner la pièce* SANS L'ENTENDRE ! Vers dix heures du soir, la toile a été baissée, et un acteur étant venu annoncer une seconde représentation, les cris et le tumulte ont redoublé. Les mécontens ont demandé le directeur ; il étoit absent. Ils ont insisté pour que la pièce ne fût plus jouée ; beaucoup de spectateurs ont réclamé une autre épreuve. Au milieu de ce conflit, la toile a été levée ; et la seconde pièce a commencé. Mais il a été impossible d'en entendre un seul mot. Une partie des spectateurs a continué à demander que la tragédie fût retirée, et l'autre qu'elle fût représentée un autre jour. Dans la confusion, il a été impossible aux acteurs qui se sont présentés pour parler à l'assemblée de se faire entendre. Enfin les domestiques du théâtre ont commencé à éteindre les lumières et à couvrir les sièges des loges ; et alors il y a eu un conflit entre eux et les mécontens. Ceux-ci ont déchiré les couvertures et les ont jetées dans le parterre ; ils ont aussi brisé quelques pupitres et commis d'autres dégâts. La salle n'a été entièrement évacuée que vers minuit. Il est impossible de prononcer sur le mérite d'une pièce, d'après une représentation aussi tumultueuse ; ainsi le sort de cette tragédie ne peut pas être considéré comme décidé irrévocablement. On nous assure que l'administration est déterminée à la faire représenter une deuxième fois immédiatement après les fêtes de Pâques. Elle devroit du moins prescrire aux acteurs de remplir leurs rôles avec plus d'attention et de zèle qu'ils ne l'ont fait Samedi. L'auteur et le public ont à se plaindre de la négligence marquée avec laquelle plusieurs d'entr'eux ont joué.—*Courier de Londres.*

what they will, it is indebted for its being withdrawn to the active hostility of the partizans of Mr. Kean.—In stating this, however, I must do Mr. Kean the justice to say, that I am convinced he was neither directly, nor indirectly, a party to the infamy of this unmanly, disgraceful, and illiterate assault !

It may now, perhaps, be expected, that I should say a few words relative to the various essays, criticisms, and pamphlets that have appeared on the subject :—and yet I have little to say. The moral point of the question has been settled by the sympathy nearly of the whole British press.—In re-

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Lundi, le 12 Avril, on a représenté pour la deuxième fois la tragédie de M. Bucke, intitulée " THE ITALIANS." Quoique l'assemblée fût moins nombreuse qu'à la première représentation, elle n'a pas été moins tumultueuse *ni moins injuste envers l'auteur !* On a remarqué dans quelques loges de chaque côté, et sur les premières bancs du parterre, un grand nombre de spectateurs très-jeunes, qui dès le commencement de la pièce l'ont interrompue par leurs cris, et ensuite n'ont pas permis aux spectateurs impartiaux d'entendre plus qu'une partie des deux premiers actes. Enfin, au milieu des plus violentes vociférations et après de vains efforts de la part du directeur, pour se faire entendre, il a paru sur l'avant-scène un placard annonçant que la pièce ne seroit plus jouée. Le tumulte n'en a pas moins continué pendant plus de trois-quarts d'heure. Alors la seconde pièce a commencé. Elle n'a pas été mieux accueillie que la tragédie, et lorsqu'elle a fini, le désordre a continué. Les mécontens se sont montrés si obstinés, que pendant plus d'une heure, on a fait de vains efforts pour les faire déguerpir du parterre. On a fait jouer quelques pompes sur eux, des galeries ; ils ont déployé aussitôt plus de cinquante parapluies pour se garantir de l'eau. Il étoit plus de minuit lorsque la salle a été entièrement évacuée.—*Courier de Londres.*

spect to the "value of my labours," there have arisen many discordant sentiments.* Being an ardent friend to critical discussion, however, I quarrel with no man for his opinions.—Let the thoughts of an Englishman be "free as the air he breathes."—I respect every man, who delivers his sentiments according to his judgment. Those, who have deliberately attempted to sacrifice the interests of an injured man to envy, jealousy, or any other unworthy passion, will be sufficiently punished by the severity of their own reflections.—For my own part, I have seen enough to disgust me with a few; and enough to delight me with the many.—I strike the balance; and I rest CONTENT!—Above all—I am truly grateful for having had an opportunity of seeing my personal friends to a most beautiful advantage!—

I willingly take this opportunity of returning thanks to Mrs. West and Mr. Rae. Their efforts were equal to the talents, by which they are so honourably distinguished.

C. B.

London, April 16, 1819.

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* Many persons have expressed surprise at some of the criticisms, that have appeared in the public Journals: and one gentleman (a stranger) has even thought it worth the trouble of furnishing me with a key to their meaning and design.—To this gentleman I return my thanks:—but modern criticisms, with a few happy exceptions, are really so little worth the trouble of perusal, that—humble and insignificant as I may be—it would surely be dishonouring the few little acquirements I possess, were I to attach to them any importance.—I value no man's opinion, who does not think for himself.

PREFACE

TO THE

SEVENTH EDITION.

A FEW days after the performance of the Tragedy, I wrote to the Committee, requesting to know what remuneration they proposed to allow, for the expenses I had incurred; the loss of time I had sustained; and the manifold inconveniences and injuries I had suffered.—To this letter I received the following unprincipled answer:—

"*Drury Lane Theatre, 17th April,* 1819.

"SIR;—The Committee direct me to state, in reply to your "letter, that the printing and sale of your drama has rendered "it public property; and entitled the proprietors of any esta- "blished theatre to the right of representing it upon the stage, "without the necessity of applying to the author for his concur- "rence. Consequently the Committee cannot acknowledge any "claim, you may assert upon this theatre, for remuneration in "consequence of its performance.

"I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

"*C. Bucke, Esq.*" "C. WARD, *Secretary.*"

This refusal, on the part of the Committee, to make any compensation, not only for my expenses of time and money, but also for the wrong they had done me, I feel to be exceedingly unjust; inasmuch as they seized upon the product of my labour; and having succeeded in drawing two large, and for that house unusual, sums of money from the public, to witness its performance, they revel, as it were, at my cost, in their own want of justice and good faith.

Upon enquiry I learnt, with regret, that immoral as this conduct assuredly is, the law has provided no remedy for its injustice; and has thereby left it, at all times, in the power of a Manager, or Managers, to wear out the patience of an Au-

thor, and provoke him by delays and aggravations to publish his production to the world; and then, contrary to one of the most sacred maxims of the constitutional law of the land, taking advantage of their own wrong, they may seize upon the property, they had affected to reject, and thereby disappoint an Author of all fair remuneration for his time, his labour, and what little genius he may chance to possess.

Upon consulting several friends of the legitimate drama, they advised me, by all means, to take advantage of the injustice, that had been practised towards me, and petition the two Houses of PARLIAMENT; *praying that the property of Dramatic Writers might be better protected for the future.*

Thus advised, I lost no time in preparing a petition; which I took the liberty of enclosing to a noble member of the House of Peers, requesting his Lordship to do me the favour to present it. His Lordship returned for answer, that he would certainly do so;—but that he thought my petition did not pray for so wide an alteration of the law, as the subject demanded.

This letter I submitted to the gentlemen, I had before consulted.—Upon perusing it, they were unanimous in the opinion, that a public meeting should be convened of the friends of the British Drama, at the THATCHED HOUSE TAVERN, St. James's Street; for the purpose of considering what steps it would be adviseable to take, in a matter so peculiarly worthy the most ample consideration.

With this view a friend waited upon a distinguished member of the House of Commons, for his advice and assistance. But that gentleman having given several very pregnant reasons, why the subject should not be pressed, *this Session*, it has been deemed prudent to defer all consideration of the object of the petition, to the time when the state of the Drama will come regularly before Parliament, with all the weight, which rank, fortune, and ability can bring to the discussion.

London, May 14, 1819. C. B.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN:

ALFONSO, King of Naples.
FONTANO, a Nobleman (*blind*).
SCIPIO, Fontano's Guide, (*an Improvisatore*).
ANGELO, in love with Fontano's Daughter.
PROPERTIO, Angelo's Friend.
MANFREDI, a Nobleman.
CAVALLO, a repenting Instrument of Claudia and Manfredi.
SCIOLTO, an Officer.

ALBANIO, in arms against his Country.
SPALATRO, CARLO, MARCO, POLYDORE, } Albanio's Officers.

WOMEN:

ANGELINA, Fontano's Daughter.
CLAUDIA, Alfonso's Mistress.
AGNES, MARCELLA, } Attendants.

Officers, Soldiers, a Woodman, &c. &c.

SCENE—*the Bay of Naples.*

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"By Fairy hands their knell is rung,
By forms unseen their dirge is sung;—
There Fancy comes, at twilight grey,
To bless the turf, that wraps their clay;
And Pity does awhile repair
To mourn a weeping Pilgrim there."

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ON THE

BEAUTIES, HARMONIES, AND SUBLIMITIES

OF

NATURE.

THE ITALIANS;

OR

THE FATAL ACCUSATION.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Alfonso's Tent.*

ALFONSO *and* CLAUDIA.

ALF. WERE the time still more urgent, I would pause.
League with a man so worthless, as Albanio ?
I think, I know Fontano's humour better !
Join with a man, who wars against his country ?
The mere suspicion is a flagrant wrong !
CLAU. Infatuated man !
ALF. *(Impatiently.)* I've known him long !
Were he intent upon a royal crown,
Would he consult Albanio for his means ?
No !—he would choose an instrument more noble,

To build the structure of his fortune with.

Clau. A bad intent requires a worthless agent!

Alf. He's had an army at command so long;
Has raised so many from a low estate;
Conferr'd so many favors on his friends;
That tools, like these, in such advent'rous cause,
With threats, and promises, and dubious words,
He'd model to his desp'rate purpose.—No!—
—And where's your proof?—In these your accusations,
I learn not that, which most would prove the fact,
That he has tamper'd with my body-guard.

Clau. He *has* been tampering with thy body-guard.
I wish Manfredi were but here to prove it!
He tells me, he has letters in possession,
Which place the fact beyond the power of doubt;
Letters, that bear Fontano's sign and seal!

Alf. Letters, that bear Fontano's sign and seal?
Fontano's letters?—Let me see them.

Clau. Why?
Shouldst thou see them, some wild insidious doubt,
Some feeble thought will raise some weak resolve,
Till doubts, and weak resolves, will end in ruin.

Alf. This language seems too strong for truth.

Clau. ——— Ah!—no!
Thou know'st, he has so strong an empire o'er thee,
Thou wilt not trust the evidence of sight!—
—But in the struggle for pre-eminence,
Thou'lt be the first to feel, though last to see.—
Stay—there's Manfredi.—How the idiot creeps!
Mark—how he starts, and falters in his walk!
He sees the danger, and his mind's disturb'd.

Enter MANFREDI.

ALF. Signor Manfredi!—I'm but ill prepared
To bear a treason from Fontano.—Where?
Where is thy proof, in evidence of guilt?

MANF. My liege!—This paper will command conviction. (*Gives the letter.*)

ALF. (*reads.*) It bears his sign:—There is no truth in man!
I loathe my nature!—'Tis Fontano's hand!

CLAU. (*aside.*) The poison operates!

MANF. (*in answer, aside.*) Hush!—To think is dangerous!—

ALF. (*reads.*) "To Signor Ursino, Captain of the "Guard.—I received thy letter by the messenger. "'Tis well!—I thank thee, for thy continued offers of "service. These offers I will repay, not with thanks "only, but with substantial rewards."—(*About to tear the letter.*)

CLAU. ——— Read the whole!—
The evidence is yet to come.—

ALF. Enough!—
I've read enough to prove Fontano's guilt!
—Yes!—'tis his hand:—it is the traitor's hand!

(*Reads.*) "All that depends on me is ready. Al- "banio, too, informs me, that his troops are well pre- "pared.—The king totters!—and I am on the rack of "impatience.—Meet me to-morrow, at St. Michael's."

"Thine faithfully, but impatiently,
"FONTANO."

And I am all impatience, my good Signor,

To give thy treachery its deserved reward!
But tell me, Signor, by what happy chance,
Thou gain'st possession of this paper.
Clau. Ah!
Let us hear that; thou didst not tell me that.—
Manf. I've lately mark'd a strange, mysterious, air,
In this good instrument, Ursino.——When
Doubt and wild daring towards high exploits
Combine in one, unequal to the hazard,
A mean suspicion is engendered, which
Never sits easy on the man, that wears it.—
Such did I mark in him; and, therefore, mus'd
For many a night, upon Ursino's change.
At length, one evening, as returning home,
Through the dark arches of St Michael's aisle,
I saw Fontano and Ursino there.
I marvell'd much!—For I had long observed
A striking coolness, that accorded ill
With such mysterious courtesy and friendship.
Alf. It look'd suspicious!
Clau. Yes! indeed it did.
Manf. At length they rose; and walking slowly on,
I heard Fontano whisper to Ursino,—
"No fear there is of that:—I know the room,
"In which Alfonso sleeps!"—On which they parted.
As I returned to where they had been sitting,
I found this paper, which Ursino dropt.
Alf. Ye gracious powers! I would ye had ordain'd
Me some lone shepherd, that amid deep glens,
And cloud-capt mountains, watch their bounding flocks!
Would I'd been taught to fell the sturdy oak;

To till the soil, or prune the purple vine :—
Yea !—to learn any thing, however mean,
Vile and ignoble :—e'en to watch the goat,
Browsing o'er herbage on a snowy heath,
Rather than guide the vessel of a state !—

CLAU. How many a man would wreck the world to do it !

ALF. So many humours to consult withal !
So many interests to combine and guard !
So many factions to control and guide !

CLAU. A noble science !

ALF. Yes !—for those, whose hearts
Long have been steel'd with tempered coats of mail !

CLAU. (*impatiently.*) Fontano—

ALF. Yes ! The state demands him :
Do with the traitor, as becomes the danger :
Yet spare his life.—I once esteem'd and lov'd him :
Remember that, when justice pleads for vengeance.
(*To Claudia.*) Nay—do not speak !—I tell thee, spare his life ! [*Exit.*

MANF. Life ?—Yes !—His life with pleasure we will spare ;
Only to curse him with a heavier fate !

CLAU. Signor Manfredi ! Tell me, tell me how—
—How shall I thank thee, as becomes my state ?
But what ?—what more ?—Oh, speak !—why look st thou thus ?

MANF. I would advise, that thou attend the king.
Let him not weigh the matter too minutely.
The hand ! the hand ! 'tis not Fontano's hand !

Therefore, to let him meditate too long
Were unsound policy.
Clau. Indeed it were.
And yet the plot commands a sure success! [*Exit.*
Manf. I hope so too!—Alfonso's mistress!—well!
[*Looking after her with contempt.*

Enter Cavallo.

Cav. What?—musing still, Manfredi?
Manf. Thou art welcome!
Cav. Signor, I hither came to be so.
Man. Well—
Then thou art doubly welcome to my heart.
Cav. I'd ask one question of thee.
Manf. Speak, I charge:
Yet commune softly. Well: thy question?
Cav. Whence—
Whence has arisen the practised Claudia's hate
To wise Fontano?
Manf. Woman!—woman!—Ah!
Tis well thou'rt made with such materials, or
Manfredi ne'er had seen a day like this!
Cav. I thought she lov'd him; and would fain have placed
Alfonso's crown upon his head.
Manf. Away!—
He is not far from Venice, who is walking
On the Rialto. Times will change, my friend;
And so will passions. *(whispering.)* He refused her love!
Cav. Indeed!
Manf. Yes!—on the faith of man!—ah, more!

He did not frown, or seem averse alone ;
He scorn'd her, Sir, I tell thee :—she's a woman !
And will that sex submit to scorn and insult ?
—He's but a fool, who does not know as much.

CAV. Now then her conduct, which to me has seem'd
So wild, and so mysterious—

MANF. Is explain'd !
Yes ! yes ! it is so : and my hate, thou know'st,
(Without intelligence from me) is bile,
Form'd by the opposition, he has raised,
To my advancement in Alfonso's court.
—The gentle Claudia has another cause—

CAV. Not more effective than the last ?

MANF. Her son,
(Born of a youthful lover) has been charged
With several crimes against the public morals.
This youth Fontano has advised the king
To supersede in his command ; and doom
To partial banishment !

CAV. And this she wisely
Charges Fontano's hate with ?—

MANF. What so likely ?
The boy deserv'd his fate, though :—but, Cavallo,
Let us not waste the time thus.

CAV. Thou hast gain'd
The end and summit of thy hopes at last ?

MANF. No !—no !—Cavallo.

CAV. Why what now, good Signor ?
Is not Fontano fettered to thy wish ?
Is not thy rival, Angelo, at length

Banish'd the city?—what then would'st thou more?

Manf. These are most true! but these are not enough!

I must complete my vengeance. I have done
Little—nay nothing; if I do no more
Than this ——

Cav. Done nothing?

Manf. No!—by this right hand!
The deed, which we have planned to execute,
This coming night, shall not complete my hope!
Claudia would, doubtless, stop at this; but I—
Hast seen the beauteous Angelina?

Cav. No!

Manf. (*whispering.*) The lovely fair one bends beneath my power!

I will inflict such vengeance on Fontano;
And on his daughter—

Cav. On his daughter?

Manf. Yes!

Cav. Thou lov'dst her once!

Manf. I did so, good Cavallo;
Did?—Ah and do!——

Cav. Then why extend revenge
To one thou lov'st?—

Manf. Because I hate the father
More than I love the daughter. Hatred is
The master passion of the two: and can I
Ruin his hopes, his happiness, and pride,
More than by her dishonour?

Cav. Dost thou not
Intend to marry Angelina then?

MANF. No!—trust me, never!—But why trifle thus?
Meet me, this evening, near Fontano's prison;
The eager Claudia will reward thee well!

CAV. (*Aside as he goes out.*) I loathe already this detested trade! [*Exit.*

MANF. (*Looking after him with suspicion.*) I fear he is but half a villain yet!
Thou hast so often thwarted my designs,
Abhorr'd Fontano, that my nature loathes thee.
Loathe thee?—Ah! worse than I abhor Albanio!
This day beyond, you'll see the sun no more!
Look at it well, while yet the time remains;
For never shalt thou see it set again.
No!—never—never—shalt thou see it more!
Some fatal dust I'll throw into thine eyes;
And then will lead thee to the neighbouring wood,
Poor; blind; deserted;—and accost thee thus:—
"Go—wander where thou wilt;—and where thy feet
"Tread the green sod, oh! may the green sod wither."
[*Exit.*

SCENE II.

An Olive Grove, with a ruinous edifice in the back-ground.

Enter ANGELINA, *attended by* AGNES.

ANGELI. Heaven sheds its mercy upon those, good Agnes,
Who pity the unfortunate.—Then tell me, tell me—
Why to this ruin I am brought?—Oh Heaven!
My senses are bewilder'd by this mystery.

Agnes. I am not hard hearted, Signora Angelina, though I may sometimes appear so:—and one day, perhaps, I may tell you all, I know of the matter; which, heaven knows, is little enough.—At present, I dare not do any such thing.

Angeli. But, my sweet Agnes; yes, thou knowest, there must be
Something in this, thou never canst approve!
My father gave me to the guardian care
Of Signor Paulo; with the strictest charge,
To guide me safe to Venice. We had travell'd
Scarce five short leagues, when, from the public road,
We turn'd into a forest.—Then we journied
Through the lone windings of a darksome glen,
Re-echoing with hoarse cataracts;—and came,
What time the moon was waning in the west,
Silent and awe-struck, to this ivied ruin.
Tis now five days—But do, my dearest Agnes,
Say, why I'm hither brought?—I pray thee, tell me.

Agnes. The Signor will come tomorrow, Signora, and then he will tell you himself.

Angeli. The Signor?—what Signor?—who is the Signor?—speak!
Is it Albanio?—Tell me, who it is.

Agnes. I dare not tell you, Signora. The Signor will tell you himself.—Have patience till tomorrow comes.—I pity you, I am sure, from my heart. But I cannot do, what I dare not do.—But why will you not listen to the warbling of these birds?—I love music, Signora. Do you not love music, too, Signora?

ANGELI. Oh! (*weeping.*)

AGNES. Her sighs and her tears really do go to my heart, so, that I know not what I shall do.—She has neither ate, nor drank, these two days!

ANGELI. Agnes!—

AGNES. Signora!—

ANGELI. Think, my good Agnes, think how hard 'twould be,
Were thy dear father suddenly o'erwhelm'd
With dire misfortunes:—If thy lover rov'd
An exile from his native city;—and thyself
Taken, like me, unknowing, to this ruin——

AGNES. I am afraid I must tell her!—and yet, if I do, what will become of myself?

ANGELI. Come, my good Agnes!—Let us to yon garden.
There let us sit upon a bank of flowers,
Or 'neath the scented shade of eglantine,
And tell me all thou know'st!—There's my sweet Agnes.
Ah!—now I love the very name of Agnes.
Come—let me take thine hand.—

AGNES. What shall I do?—The Signor told me not to say. If I did, he said, I should repent it all the days of my life.

ANGELI. Repent!—Ah! no.—Thou never canst repent
A virtuous deed; Oh! never—never!—No—
Not if thou live—e'en for a thousand years!
Come then:—There—lean thine arm on one,
Who fain would love thee as a daughter;—come!—

Enter Angelo *and* Propertio.—*The latter with a lute in his hand.*

Ang. Here let us sit.—I'm weary !—What a life
An exile leads !—
Pro. Nay—be not melancholy.
Manfredi lives a far worse life, than thou.—
I would not feel the anguish of his heart,
For all the universe.—Come—cheer thee up,
We are not far from Angelina now.
There—take this lute—
Ang. It is no time for music !
Pro. Nay, I request thee—
Ang. Music is design'd
For happier spirits : [*Takes the lute.*
Ah! the world—the world
Must needs be cruel, since I loathe my lute.
[*Tunes a wild flourish.*
I could not draw one rich, harmonious, note,
Were it to gain an empire ! [*Returns the lute.*
Pro. I have done !—
Ang. Thou art the noblest of the sons of friendship !
For often hast thou chear'd my sinking heart,
When care has weighed my anxious spirit down.
Pro. Nay—nay :—It ill becomes thee to indulge,
In such deep draughts of melancholy thought.
I well remember, when,—in love with nature,—
We've wander'd oft within the forest wide,
That screen'd thy father's castle, thou wert wont,
For hours, to loiter near the mossy brook,

That murmur'd music down the deepening glen.—
Fair Nature then, in all her bold display,
Shot rapture through thy frame.—Each wood, each vale,
Each torrent, rushing from high cataracts,
Then had their graces and sublimities; but now!—
ANG. 'Tis true!—But when we've mixt with men, and felt
The influence of their passions, it excites,
In our disgust at them, distaste for Nature.
PRO. It seems to have that influence upon you!
For e'en yon woods, whose very leaves are sacred,
Nor e'en yon mountains, towering up to heaven,
Call forth one note of holy admiration.
I wonder much!—Why!—e'en the setting sun,
(Sublimest image of eternal glory!)
Colours yon clouds with golden tints in vain!
ANG. Of late, Propertio, I have drunk too deep,
In sorrow's bitter cup!—Yon glowing sun
Ne'er smiled on one, so lovely and so fair;
So fruitful in all virtues of the heart;
And so abounding in the gifts of mind,
As good Fontano's daughter.——
PRO. Lovelier far
Than fancy e'er can paint!
ANG.——Where is she now?————
Perhaps the victim of Manfredi's love!
Oh!—Angelina!—Thou art doom'd to ruin!—
Thrilling with horror in the midst of shame;
Unless kind heaven take pity on thy tears!

Pro. And heaven will do so,—or I'm much deceived!

Didst thou not say, that, near this woody spot,
The ruin stands, in which thy fair-one weeps.

Ang. Yes!—In a ruin hid with ivy:—there
Manfredi purposes her destiny.—

Pro. Then let us—

Ang. Meet the hated monster there?
I've planned it so!

Pro. Then whence this gloomy mood?

Ang. Fontano!—Ah my friend!—Fontano's lot
Is yet more melancholy far than mine!—

Pro. I've heard the dreadful tale; and, hearing, dropt
The tear of tenderest sympathy!—yet since—
But what is this?—A ruin!—Is it here?
Can it be here, that Angelina dwells?

Ang. This is the spot!—Oh!—Fortune, thou'rt my friend.—
Tread lightly!—List!—come;—let us to yon wood,
And meditate the rescue.—Then thou may'st
Return to save Fontano's house from ruin.

[*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Alfonso's Tent.

CLAUDIA—*Sola.*

CLAU. ODIOUS Fontano !—how my heart detests thee!
What ?—Scorn my love ?—Refuse a proferr'd crown ?
Counsel the king to listen to the charge
Against my only son ?—A charge, which doom'd
That son to banishment !—I'll bear no more !
[*Enter Cavallo.*
Speak !—Speak !—Cavallo—Is the deed perform'd ?
CAV. Ne'er shall Fontano see the light again !
He lives, but sees not !—Yes !— The deed is done.
Would it were undone !—Miserable man !
Why ?—why, assist in such a barbarous deed ?
CLAU. Would it were undone ?—Nay, my good Cavallo,
Would that it could be executed twice !
But what said he ?—How bore he all the pain ?
Did he not weep ?—Or bore he all in silence ?

Cav. As to Fontano's miserable cell,
Silent, and anxious of the deed, we mov'd,
Manfredi whispered me to move with care;
Lest, in our haste, we wak'd him from his rest.
For, though in chains, Manfredi fear'd his arm.

Clau. The senseless coward!—But did Fontano shew
No signs of misery.—Heav'd he not a sigh?
Said he no word?—Did he not curse me?—Speak!—

Cav. He wore an air of manly melancholy!
We found him sitting at his prison window,
Watching the clouds, that roll'd in volumes round
The giant summit of Vesuvius!
The moon, at intervals, illumin'd his face;
No passion seem'd to move him:—All was calm,
E'en as the scene, on which his eyes were fixt!
He heard us not:—But, ever and anon,
Drew deep ton'd murmurs from a trembling lyre.—

Clau. Oh! what a tale is this!—A poet's tale!
Worthy the pen of Tasso!—Well! what more?

Cav. Sometimes he seem'd, as wandering wild in thought;
For, now and then, the sounds were wild and sad;—
Now he would chaunt the Virgin's evening hymn;
At which I trembled, and Manfredi too!

Clau. Trembled?—The bigots!—But proceed,—proceed.

Cav. Seeing him thus absorb'd, Manfredi rush'd,
As if he were awaken'd from a trance;—
And as Fontano, for the last, last time,
Fix'd one sad look upon the scene, which rais'd
His thoughts to heaven, full in his visual orbs

Scattered the drug, that robb'd his eyes of light!
Oh! righteous heaven! I do repent me now
Of all I saw!—that, seeing, I forbore
To strike the hand that did it.—Gracious heaven!

CLAU. —Repent thee?—Nay, Cavallo, why repent?
Thou canst not doubt, but I'll reward thee well!

CAV. Not all the wealth, Italian monarchs boast;
Nor all the gems, that Indian quarries yield,
E'er can reward me.—Oh! that I had died
E'er, in an hour accursed, I gave consent,
Thus, thus, to barter all my hopes of heaven!
What, though I were beset with ills around,
Steep'd in the gulph of every deep distress,
And my lov'd infants famishing with want—

CLAU. They'll want no longer!—

CAV. Yes!—a father's fame!
Oh!—better had they pined, from day to day,
Till death had lull'd them to a happier fate;
Than that their father should allay their wants
In banquets, purchased at a rate so dear!

CLAU. Cavallo!—why—I took thee for a MAN!
Nature had stampt a goodly image on thee;
Therefore, I say, I took thee for a MAN!
This weak, this idle, sense of moral wrong
Writes driveller on thy forehead!—But proceed—

CAV. —'Tis done!—alas!—the coward act is done!
Manfredi did it!—Having so perform'd,
Unpitying,—unrelenting,—and unmoved,
He led him to yon precipices; where,
Watching the bubbles of a spring, he saw,

Eating wild berries for a feast, a Boy,
Who smil'd with rapture at the sight of money.

Clau. And what ensued?

Cav. Manfredi gave a ducat;
And whisper'd in the famish'd urchin's ear,
That if he wished for fifty ducats more,
He'd lead the miserable, sightless man,
Up to the margin of a precipice,
And leave him there, to wander as he would!

Clau. 'Twas well concluded!—And ye left him there?

Cav. Yes! there we left him.—Thus I quit my tale.
Would I could lose all memory of it too!

Clau. Hence—hence!—thou hero of the ready tear;
Hence, to Manfredi!—Send Manfredi hither.—
(*Aside.*) I fain would thank him for Fontano's ruin;
[*Exit Cavallo.*
Oh!—it is balsam to my soul indeed!— [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

An olive grove.—A ruinous edifice on one side; a bridge over a stream on the other.

Enter Manfredi.

'Tis here—at evening—Angelina walks,
To meditate on absent friends.—I'll make her mine!
Fool—that I was—to trust so young a boy,
To lead her father to a precipice!—
Fool!—fool!—unworthy of a high estate!
The boy, as every idiot might foresee,
Pitied the wretch, because the wretch was blind

And leads him on, as I am taught to fear,
By secret paths to Venice. There he hopes
To meet his daughter.—Little does he think—
Ah!—little dreams he, that the friend, he chose,
To guide his daughter to the court of Venice,
Bribed high by me, convey'd the treasure here.
Oh! sightless idiot!—Hope deludes thy fancy!
Meet thee at Venice?—Hail thy hopes at Venice?
Yes!—yes!—she'll meet thee, miserable father,
Meet thee, and stun thee, with her sighs and tears,
Ruin'd and dishonor'd.—She appears!
List—list—she comes!—Her steps resound with music!
[*Retires.*

Enter ANGELINA, *attended by* AGNES.

ANGELI. Ah!—with what pensive pleasure does the mind
Dwell on those moments of delighted youth;
When, led by Angelo, through vallies deep,
We've culled sweet violets from soft beds of moss,
Or snatch'd wild roses from a wilderness
Of thorns and briery brakes:—enchanting time!

AGNES. Signora!—Bless me!—she is so melancholy, that she will not speak to me.——Poor heart!—she is not proud—she is only sad!——

(*Manfredi comes a little forward, and conceals himself behind one of the trees, not far distant from Angelina.*

ANGELI. Sometimes we've wandered on the rocky shore,

To hear the murmur of each curling wave:
Sometimes the colours of departing day
Have charm'd our footsteps up the mountain side.
Till in the east, in silent state, the moon
Ting'd every cloud with most bewitching hue;
And o'er the shadowy scene such glory cast,
That Nature paus'd, and gazed, with silent rapture,
On this her fair creation.

Manf. (*aside.*) How each word
Sinks to the deep recesses of my soul!

Angeli. But why recal those happy moments now?—

Agnes. Why do you then?—present sorrows, Signora, are always enough for the time.

Angeli. Ah, my good Agnes, what thou say'st is true.
Oh! my dear father!—How my sinking heart
Bleeds for thy sorrows!—Lead me to thy chamber:
My eyes feel heavy; and my life a burthen.

Agnes. Come then, good Signora;—come with me. I've made a bed for you, as soft as rose-leaves.—Singing, sleeping, and dreaming, Signora, are the best pastimes of a body's life.

Angeli. Yes!—when we sing
With a pleas'd heart, and sleep with soundest sleep,
And dream of those we love.—Ah! why didst wake me,
So early in the morning?—

Agnes. What did you dream about, then, good Signora?—Not about Signor Manfredi?—No!—no!—It was not about Signor Manfredi!—

MANF. (*aside.*) Detested serpent!—Yes!—
Thy nerves shall ache
With deadliest torture all thy life to come.

ANGELI. Methought, last night, I saw my father's arms
Stretched out to save me.—'Twas an airy dream!—
Ah Heaven!—I thank thee, that he knows not yet,
What woes I've suffered; and what anguish now
Wrings his poor daughter's bosom with despair.

AGNES. Do not weep, Signora,—do not weep.—
Alas!—alas!—she does not hear me.——Poor lady
—I pity her from my heart.—Oh!—good heaven—the
Signor!— (MANFREDI *comes forward.*

ANGELI. Signor Manfredi!—Then I'm lost indeed!

MANF. (*Points to Agnes to go off.*) (*Exit* AGNES.
Not lost, fair ingrate!—But why drown'd in tears?
Is this my only recompence?—But why
Those looks so haughty?—Did I love thee less,
Ill should I brook such dignified returns.

ANGELI. 'Tis well such conduct meets with such reward
Did'st thou not steal me from the friends, I loved?
And at a time, too, when my father,—ruined—
Needed the solace of his daughter most?
Was that a moment to distress me more?
Oh!—yes—a time, most meet for such design!

MANF. Fair Angelina!—some officious friend
Has, with successful malice, wrong'd thine ear.
I call the sainted spirits to be witness—

ANGE. Away!—away!—No more!—Wert thou to call
E'en Heaven itself, it would avail thee nought.

Manf. By Heaven thou wrong'st me.—No, my Angelina,
I lov'd thy father, though he lov'd not me.
I lov'd his virtues;—I admired his zeal:
And, if I cou'd have imitated any,
His was the model, I'd have copied from.

Angeli. Has Heaven no judgments for hypocrisy?

Manf. Ah! how thy words do sully thy sweet lips!
Nay!—Angelina, do—I charge,—dismiss
Doubts of my sacred honour, which ne'er yet,
E'en by the venom of a slanderer's tongue,
Has once been breath'd on.—

Angeli. I'm the slanderer then!

Manf. Come my sweet maid.—

Angeli. Oh! miracle of meanness!—
What?—would'st thou stoop to take a wife so cold,
So loathing, and so hating?—Who, from youth,
Has pledged her faith to one, the proudest boast
Of all the maids of Italy.—His name
I will not, need not, breathe.—

Manf. Insulting maid!
This—this is past endurance.—

Angeli. Who as much,
In all the true nobility of heart,
As in his form and manners, does surpass
Thee;—as, in turn, thyself eclipsest all,
The poets dream of, when they paint a monster.

Manf. Why all this anger?—Fair, deluded maid!
Why all this anger? 'twill avail thee nought—

Angeli. Signor Manfredi!—rather would I die
Ten thousand deaths, than listen to thy prayers.
Angelo!—earliest idol of my heart!

MANF. Angelo?—Yes!—This goodly Angelo
Now pays dear penance for his treachery.
And can this youth be Angelina's idol?
Theme of her boast, and monarch of her heart?
Oh! he would stain it, lady; he would stain it—

ANGELI. Thy tongue speaks slander, thou unworthy man!
He is all honour; full of noblest thoughts.—
E'en now he animates my glowing breast
With all his virtues; and inspires my heart
With hatred for thy crimes.—Could Angelo—

MANF. Not Angelo, nor Heaven itself, can now
Secure thee from my arms.—

ANGELI. Oh!—Heaven —To thee
I call for my revenge!—This friendly dagger—

(*Takes a dagger from her bosom and prepares to strike, when* MANFREDI *seizes her arm, and snatches it away.*

MANF. Is weak and powerless in a woman's hand!
There—get thee hence—thou enemy to love—
(*Throws it away.*
Fair Angelina—

ANGELI. Vilest wretch!—Away.

Enter ANGELO.

ANGELI. This way the noise was.—Yes:—The fiend is here!
Turn, son of hell; thy hated visage turn.

[MANFREDI *turns, draws, and rushes upon* ANGELO. *After fighting some time, he retreats upon the bridge, and falls into the stream, that flows beneath.*

Ang. There, worthless miscreant, buffet with the stream;
And let thy Fortune save thee, if she will.
[*Flies to* Angelina, *who has fainted.*
Fair Angelina!—'Tis thy love that calls.
Thy father lives—he journeys on to Venice.
Look up, my angel;—yes—thy father lives—
Indeed he lives!—Propertio's gone to Naples,
To save the remnants of his shattered fortune.
[*Takes her in his arms.*

A Woodman *passes hastily over the stage.*

Wood. Bear up, Signor.—I'll bring you to shore, whoever you are. (*without.*) Take hold of this bough, Signor.—Holloa—holloa!—

Ang. The woodman saves him!—See—he drags him to the shore!
Look up, my fair:—'tis ruin here to stay.
Just Heaven, how cold!—Alas!—she dies—she dies!
[*Carries her into the forest.*

SCENE III.

A distant View of the City of Naples.

Enter Fontano *and* Scipio *among Precipices.*

Sci. Follow my steps, Signor; and we shall soon come to a safer road than this. Oh! 'twas a cruel deed, to rob you of your sight, and then to leave you among these dreadful precipices.

FON. Cruel beyond the cruelty of men.
Where art thou, Scipio?—Let me hold thine hand!
I fear to step;—these rocks are wild and steep;
There—lead thee on:—to thee and heaven I trust!

SCI. And heaven shall fail you, Signor, sooner than I will.

FON. Heaven proves its mercy by its gift of thee!
Alfonso!—Oh Alfonso!—To be duped
By the low craft of Claudia!—'Tis too much!
Ah!—how man's intellect does crouch before
The bought endearments of an artful woman!

SCI. Whither shall I lead you, Signor?

FON. Lead me to Venice, boy.
Lead me safe thither; and my gratitude
Shall pay thee well, for thy good conduct towards me.

SCI. Venice?—Venice, I suppose, is a long way off, Signor, is it not?—But we shall one day reach it, nevertheless, I hope. This ducat, which the savage Signor gave me, will take us several leagues. When we have spent it, Signor, have I your leave to exercise my profession?

FON. (*smiling.*) Profession?
And what is that, my noble minded boy?

SCI. Why, Signor, you must know, the Virgin and my mother taught me the art of an improvisatore.—So, if I see a rich cavalier, riding on the road, this is the way, I shall begin, perhaps:

Stop, Signor, stop; and, if you can,
Relieve this poor, ill-fated, man:

For he was once devoutly kind,
Though now he's indigent and blind.
The road is rough;—the way is long;
The arm of malice, wild and strong:
Then stop, good Signor, stop, I pray;
Let fall a ducat in our way;
And heaven, no doubt, will bless your hopes to-day.

Fon. Oh! richest mirror of a noble heart!
What splendid court contains a soul like thine?

Sci. Come, Signor, don't be afraid;—this is the way:

These rocks so high,—these paths so rough—
Are desert, waste, and wild enough,
To strike our hearts with dread:
But, let me, Signor, move before:
There—take this hand;—and grieve no more:
For heaven, from this day forth, will pour
Rich blessings on thine head.

Fon. To grant me thee, my Scipio, was indeed
To grant a treasure, that I ne'er could hope,
In this most weary pilgrimage!—Proceed.
If heaven has but preserved my child, I yet
May taste of happiness!—'Tis now sev'n days,
Since she and Paulo took the road to Venice.

Sci. Then let us take the road to Venice, too, Signor. If a lady can travel to Venice in seven days, surely you and I can go thither in ten. Come, Signor, who is afraid?

Fon. Paulo's a man—I would have had a better;
But that the time prevented.—Heaven preserve her!

SCI. Come, Signor, come along: the road is better now.

FON. Well, my dear boy.—But we must now be cautious.

Albanio's camp, if I mistake not, lies
Full towards the west:—so lead me northward, boy.

SCI. Albanio? Who is Albanio, Signor? I have heard a great deal of talk about this Signor Albanio; but cannot make out, who he is.

FON. He is far worse, than language e'er can paint!
He slew his wife, at midnight; fled the land,
Which gave him birth; and wars on all its sons!—

SCIP. Oh!! What a monster!

(*A hunting horn heard at a distance.*)

Merciful Virgin!—There are three or four men, flying from rock to rock, yonder, as if they were frantic. For heaven's sake Signor, let us get out of their way, as fast as we can. (*Horn louder.*) Oh!—it is a chamois hunt.—Ah! now they have killed the poor chamois!—Here they come, Signor; we had better retire: for they may hunt us now, as far as we know.—Come, Signor; we have not a single moment to lose. [*Exeunt.*

Enter ALBANIO, SPALATRO, CARLO, MARCO, *&c.* ALBANIO *comes forward, and leans, for a few moments, in a melancholy attitude against one of the rocks.*

ALB. It shames my nature, thus to waste the time
In the pursuit of animals, while men

Are hunting me.—I stand ashamed!—The world—
'Twill laugh to hear it. (*relapses into thought.*)
——————————— If I draw my bow
Thus, and then thus;—then this way, and then that;
What city's walls shall I have outlin'd?—Speak!

Spa. What city's outlines?—Why—the walls of Naples.

Alb. Ah! thou art right!—And hadst thou said the walls
Of Babylon, or Nineveh, thou hadst
Said rightly too. For e'er the gilded moon
Shall wane into a melancholy crescent,
Naples shall be a Nineveh!

Spa. A Nineveh?

Alb. Yes,—a Nineveh, and a Babylon!
One stone shall not repose upon another!
The future traveller shall search for her,
And dust alone shall recompense his search!
And we've been hunting here, like boys and clowns,
Because a chamois cross'd us on our way!
I stand ashamed at such a folly.—Marco,
Unbend thy bow;—and thou—and thou—and thou.
[*They unbend their bows.*
'Tis thus—and more than thus—
[*Breaking the bow.*
Spalatro?—here!
Hast ever heard?—But stay—the sun is up,
And this no time for secrets.—Now—be honest—
I sometimes fear my faculties do wander!—
That is, Spalatro, now and then:—not now:—

But when I brood too deeply o'er my sorrows.
Hast thou remark'd it?—Come, be honest—speak—
Speak like a man, that venerates another,
Loving the truth.

SPA. I ne'er observ'd it, Signor.

ALB. Nay now—thy looks speak truer, than thy words.

But I forgive thee.—Truth's an honest fool,
That few men love to deal with.
(*With some hesitation.*) Hast thou heard?—
Hast ever heard, that I was married?

SPA. Yes.

ALB. Thou hast?

SPA. I've heard it whisper'd, Signor—

ALB. Whisper'd?—
Right noble men speak out; they never whisper!
Why should men whisper, when they speak the truth?
Manfredi is the villain!—Was it he—
Was it not he, that stabb'd my innocent wife?

SPA. (*In a very indistinct manner.*) Horrible!

ALB. What?—think'st thou, then, 'twas I?
If thou think that—

SPA. Most noble Signor, thou mistak'st my meaning.

ALB. (*His passion subsiding in an instant.*) Thine hand!—I'm hasty—but I'm innocent.
Oh, if thou knew mine agony of soul!—

SPA. I could not love thee more!

ALL. Nor we.
Nor we.
Nor we either, Signor.

Alb. Bear with my humour!—Friends, I thank ye all.
I've sworn eternal hatred to Manfredi!
I've sworn eternal hatred unto Naples!
And war,—eternal war—'gainst all her perjur'd sons!
And, if ye wish to know the hated cause,
Follow my steps, and I will tell it ye.
But, ere ye hear my agonizing tale,
Swear, by this sword, ye will revenge my cause—
Spa. We swear!—
All. We swear!
Spa. And may perdition hurl
Her deadliest tortures, if we e'er prove false!
Alb. Then I am trebly arm'd!—Spalatro, come;
Come, my bold comrades;—let us to our rocks,
And meditate the ruin.—Naples—see—
Yon distant towers are those of Naples!—we—
We'll pulverize each palace into dust,
———— So small, ————
That e'en a summer's breeze may waft it to the skies!
[*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.

A side view of ALFONSO's *Tent.*

Enter CLAUDIA, *musing.*

CLAU. THIS does perplex me more,
Than all my other causes of complaint!
Manfredi missing?—'Tis a mystery
I have no power to solve.—The king?—he comes,
When I'm but ill prepared to meet him.—List!—

Enter ALFONSO, SCIOLTO, *and several Officers. Officers retire to the back part of the stage.*
[*Claudia retiring.*

ALF. Whither, my gentle Claudia, art thou going?
I would exchange some words of import with thee.
CLAU. Ever obedient to thy sacred will!
What wouldst thou urge, my lord?
ALF. I fear me much,
Signor Manfredi has dishonoured us.—
CLAU. In what?—dishonoured thee?—Impossible!

Alf. He came not, at our bidding, to the council;
Which I've thought prudent, therefore, to delay.
And rumour says, he's no where to be found.
This looks suspicious.—Whither is he gone?

Clau. It is a question, I'd give worlds to solve!

Alf. Ha!—wouldst thou?

Clau. Yes!—assuredly I would!—

Alf. I know not why thou should'st:—Fontano's fate
Call'd from thine eye-lid not one pitying tear.—
I see no urgent reason, therefore, why
Manfredi's should distress thee.—He's a villain.

Clau. A villain?—What?—Thy faithful friend, Manfredi?

Alf. There's one, who gives us reason to suspect,
This "*faithful friend*," Manfredi, is a villain!

Clau. I much do question it —

Alf. Indeed?—Indeed?

Clau. Beware, my liege, the monarch's bitterest foe,
Suspicion!—'Tis an enemy, that sits—
Oh! how ungracefully—on a manly brow.
Dismiss it, Sire, I charge thee.—'Tis a fiend!
We ought not to give credit to vile tales,
Against an absent man. [*Exit haughtily.*

Alf. 'Tis nobly said!
Would I had listened to that bosom truth,
Ere I had given such credit to Manfredi!
Hither,—Sciolto!—To the neighbouring rocks
Thou shalt attend us.—There Fontano travels,
Led by a guide.—We must propose some plan,

As thither we are journeying, to establish,
Whether or no Cavallo's tale be true.
Prepare my Claudia for the march
She must attend us —Haste :—away

SCIO. But if
The stern Albanio should surprize us there?
Ere morrow's night, he meditates, they say,
Naples to lay in ruins !—Mid yon rocks
He sits, when military caution grants,
And loads the air, with many a bitter curse,
Against the sons of Naples.

ALF. Yes ;—'tis true.
But I'm a foe to fear.—He 'll dearly pay
For bearing arms against his native city.
Let us away :—I will not sleep, till I
Have proved the worth, or falsehood, of Fontano.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Scene changes, and discovers ALBANIO, *with* SPALATRO, CARLO, *and a select number of his troop, reclining among scattered rocks, in one of the recesses of a vast pile of mountains, capt with snow. A Cave at the farther end of the stage, almost entirely screened by overhanging herbage.*

ALB. My tale is short.—Ye all have heard the chance,
That placed Alfonso on the throne of Naples!

CARLO. We have, we have.

SPA. And suffered from it too.

Alb. He was elected by the people's voice,
To stem the torrent of the lawless power
Of factious nobles.—He deserved the honour!

Spa. 'Tis nobly said, since he is now thy foe.

Alb. To drown all cause of future jealousies,
The king, to win my interest in the state,
Gave me consent to marry with his niece;
Whom I, in studious secresy, had loved,
From the first dawn of youthful manhood.—Oh!
How my nerves thrill!—The vile Manfredi, too,
Long had the captivating maiden loved!
This hated monster, stung with jealous rage,
The very midnight of our wedding day,
Silently stealing, from th' adjoining closet,
(Where, by the treachery of my groom, he lay),
And, as in nature's best repose we slept,
Murdered my wife!—

Spa. Oh, monster!—monster!—

Troop. Horrible!—

Alb. O'ercome with terror, in the dread confusion,
The assassin fiend escaped my angry arm;
And to the astonished world proclaim'd aloud,
I did the deed in jealousy of him.

Spa. Execrable villain!—

Car. Vile, detested fiend!

Alb. All Naples rose, in tumults, in the morn.
From house to house the monstrous rumour ran;
That I—that I—that I had stabb'd my wife!
My friends forsook me:—every lisping babe
Was taught to curse me:—e'en Fontano, too,
Believed the tale, and showered invectives on me.

The people, from all quarters of the city,
Like hungry hornets driven from their nests,
Throng'd round my house, demanding my arrest!

SPA. And did the miscreants seize upon thee, Signor?

ALB. Seize on me?—Aye!—and to the prison gates
They dragg'd me—hisssing all the odious way.
Oh, what a time was that!—The city shouted,
Calling me tiger, monster, and hyena,
And dogs were taught to snarl at vile Albanio's name.

SPA. Did they not try thee, noble Signor?

ALB. Yes!
Oh, yes—they tried!—But justice fled the city.
Manfredi pensioned witnesses against me!
They swore!—Naples believed!—Albanio was undone!—
To lose my wife—fame—fortune—in an hour!
Too much it was for human strength!—I'm told—
And I believe the tale—"my mind is ruined!"

[*Tears starting into his eyes.*

SPA. No, Signor, no.—

ALB. Would I could think so.—Yes, my mind is ruined!

SPA. Come, noble Signor, do not brood over your injuries now. Tell us the sequel of your history.

ALB. Amid these mountains once a hermit lived.
His food were berries, and his drink the dews,
Distilling from the leaves of olives.—He—
But stay—my mind is sailing in the air!—

'Twas not a hermit's history, I was telling:—
Where left I off?——He pensioned witnesses, I say:
Naples believed, convicted, and condemned me!
Oh, cruel, senseless, idiots!—In the town
One only man was found with heart to pity;—
That man my gaoler!—He believed me wrong'd,
Applied the balm of comfort to my breast,
Oped wide his gates, and bade me to be free.
I fled—and here, amid these mountains wild,
A refuge found.—This, comrades, is my tale.
For this I have vow'd vengeance to Manfredi;
And, for believing his enormous charge,
Have I vow'd hate against the sons of Naples!

Spa. And we'll assist thee, in thy just revenge!

Troop. (*tumultuously.*) All!—all!—all!

Alb. Then ere the setting of to-morrow's sun,
Naples, the credulous, insidious Naples,
Prostrate shall lie!—Amid its ruins, weeping,
The snow-hair'd sire shall recognize his son,
Amongst the heap of dying and the dead;
The wife her husband; while her little babe
Shall pinch her bleeding breast, in vain, for food!

Spa. Then come, my comrades, echo every note,
That forms the chorus of our evening song.

Alb. First to the banquet!—Let us form the hymn
O'er golden goblets. Enter to the feast.
Come, my brave brothers, to this coral cave;
Screen'd from the sight by many a shady bough.
Full many a fathom is it deep.—'Tis there

We hold our banquet.—Enter to the feast;—
And drink due honour to the safe arrival
Of those brave troops, who'll join us on the morrow.

[*Exeunt into the cave.*

Enter FONTANO *and* SCIPIO.

SCI. Take care, Signor; mind how you walk; these great stones, and pieces of rock, are enough to throw both of us down.—Oh!—I begin to be almost tired.

FON. Let us sit down then, Scipio.—I would not tire thee, for the world. Let us sit down, I say.

SCI. So we will, Signor.—Here,—here—is a clean, mossy place, fit for a lady to sit down upon.

[*They sit down.*

FON. Art thou hungry or thirsty, Scipio?—

SCI. N—o; are you thirsty, Signor?

FON. Yes, my little friend, I am thirsty.

SCI. So am I, Signor; very thirsty indeed!

FON. I thought thou saidst, thou wert not, Scipio?

SCI. Why, I did not mean to confess, that I was thirsty, unless you were so too, Signor; because, if we are ever so thirsty, there is nothing for us to drink.

FON. Thou art the best of all possible comforters, Scipio.—But search about; perhaps you may find a spring, some where bubbling from these mossy rocks.

SCI. So we will, Signor.—It is not impossible.—

Among the woods, along the ground
Among the rocks we'll look around.

Fon. Thou dear little improvisatore!

Sci. Perhaps from some lone rock there wells
A bubbling spring;—perhaps there dwells
Some little nymph of Scipio's age,
Who guards the fount, from robber's rage.
Ah!—If I find one, as I go,—
I'll kiss the little maiden so!
And while she cries—"No—no—no—no;"—
I'll bid her love poor Scipio!

What a vast number of birds, Signor, there seem to be in this solitude.—I wonder, they should choose to live, where there is not a single soul to listen to their music.—Did you not say, Signor; that the bird, we heard just now, was a nightingale?

Fon. Yes; 'twas a nightingale!—sure notes so wild,
So tender, and so rich, were never heard
In Persia, or in Araby.

Sci. List!—list!—

[*Nightingale sings.*

There, there, she flies to yon tall sycamore.

Fon. Hark!—Hark!—She breathes her solemn strain again!

Sci. Oh!—how she jugs!—

Fon. A pause more sweet, than that,
Ne'er lulled the night to ravishment!—Again?

Sci. There she flies, Signor!—Why she flies as fast, as if she thought, we came to rob her of her brains.—Fairies, they say, Signor, live upon the brains of nightingales.

Fon. Do they so, my little bird of paradise?—

SCI. Yes!—Signor.—And not only on the brains of nightingales, but on the purple leaves of violets.—Oh!—It must be excellent food!

Violet leaves and nightingales' brains
Are food for gentle fairy;
When she whispers amorous strains,
To slumbering maids of the dairy.

FON. Thou art so cheerful and engaging, boy,
That nightingales will cover thee with leaves;
And flowers spring up, in myriads, o'er thy grave,
To tell each stranger, as he passes by,
That Nature's happiest work lies buried there.

SCI. Oh!—that were charming, if it e'er prove true.

Violet leaves and nightingales' brains
Are food, &c. &c. [*Exeunt.*

Enter ANGELO *and* ANGELINA, *at the farther end of the stage.*

ANGELI. Ah! dearest Angelo, to thee I owe,
More than a life of endless power could pay.
How shall I thank thee? How reward thy love?

ANG. With thy sweet self!

ANGELI. An indigent reward!

ANG. Richer, by far, than monarchs can bestow.

ANGELI. But ah!—my father!—whither strays my father?
Oh!—never, never, shall I see him more!
This way, thou saidst, he travelled;—but I see
No traces of his wandering!—Oh! that I could!

When first thou sav'd'st me from Manfredi's arms,
I gave myself to happiness: ah! then
I little thought, how rude the storm had visited
My father's sacred head. Oh! dearest love—
Oh! think, how hard to be deprived of sight,
And wandering all alone. ———————

Ang. Hush, my sweet maid, and let me lead thee to
The sheltering arch of these impending piles;
While I, amid the mazes of the rocks,
Seek for a cave to screen thee from the winds.
———————— Here sit thee down;
Till I have found, amid these desert wilds,
A cave, to shelter thy sweet innocence.

(*Searches about.*)

Angeli. How does the music of thy voice compose
Each misery to silence! Art thou gone?
How shall I cheat the anxious time away,
Till thy belov'd return? Oh that I could,
Like Orpheus, fam'd of old, with vocal lyre,
Charm these rude rocks away!—Angelo! (*Calls.*)

[*Her voice reverberates among the mountains.*

How the rocks echo!—Angelo!—Angelo!—

[*Echoes.*

Stay—I will follow thee; we'll search together. [*Exit.*

Enter Scipio *cautiously.*

What sounds are these, I wonder?—These rocks do nothing but echo!—and that, too, with such music, as I never heard before. Why—I do not see any one! Signor Fontano told me, that echo never speaks, but when some one has spoken to her. But I do not be-

lieve, any one spoke to her now; so, I suppose, she has learnt to talk to herself. (*Looks about.*) Here?—No—I do not see any one here.—I will return to the Signor again! Ah!—now—I would give half this ducat, if I could but discover a fountain: I am so thirsty, I know not what I shall do!

Fon. (*without.*) Scipio!—Scipio!—where art thou, Scipio?

Sci. Ha—ha!—There is the Signor, I declare. Stop, Signor, I am coming. Come along, Signor! The way is even there: come along: a little more to the right, Signor. [*Enter* Fontano.] Why, I declare, Signor, you walk very well without a guide!

Fon. Thou art an excellent companion, for a melancholy spirit, Scipio.

Sci. But the echo, Signor!—Did you ever hear any thing, so beautiful in all your life?—Now,—if I might—I would sing you a canzonet, Signor, that you would, perhaps, have no objection to hear again.—That is, when you are melancholy.

Fon. Can'st thou?—Then sing it me, I pray thee.

Sci. You must not laugh, Signor.—Don't look at me, Signor.

Fon. Alas!—my boy, I ne'er shall see again!

Sci. Oh! I beg your pardon, Signor.—I had really quite forgot, that you were blind!—I am a thoughtless little fellow, Signor, without wit; and, I am sorry to say, without money.—But I mean no harm, Signor; and so I'll sing you a stanza:—and if you do not like it, I'll never sing you another:—so you will only lose three minutes of time.

Fon. Thou mak'st me smile, in spite of all my sorrows!

ECHO—Canzonet.

I.

Sci. From the grot, where Echo lies,
At dawn of day, fond Zephyr flies;
And, gliding on the rays of morning,
With many a dye the clouds adorning;
Now he soars, and now he falls;
Now on gentle Echo calls;
While, from her green recess, the Nymph replies
In wildest melodies.
[*Echoes*

Sci. There, Signor,—is not that very pretty?

Fon. Beautiful, my little nightingale; and beautifully sung.

Sci. Nay—Signor,—I did not ask for that.—But there's only one stanza, Signor;—shall I sing you the other?—

Fon. Ah —my sweet linnet, twenty if you will.

Sci. There is but one more, Signor;—but that, I think, is the best.—Now then!—I'm almost ashamed, too!—

II.

Every glen, and mountain round,
Repeats the wild, mysterious, sound;
And all the scene, both far and near,
Delighted lends a listening ear;
Till, lost in eddying circles wide,
From hill to hill, from side to side,
Her hovering voice, in sweet progression dies,
In gentlest extasies.
[*Echoes.*

SCI. There, Signor.—Never ask me to sing again.
—But what is this?—I surely hear a sound—

FON. List! list!—Lead forward:—Danger travels near.—

[*Exeunt.*

Re-enter ANGELO *and* ANGELINA, *at the farther end of the stage.*

ANG. These rocks seem vocal; yet no human form
Appears to animate their solitude.

ANGELI. A voice
We surely heard; and then its echo.

ANG. Yes!—
Yet here no trace of wandering man is found!—
(*Sees the cave.*)—A cave!—
Made to our hopes, and suited to our fortune!
Its entrance form'd of coral!—like those caves,
Form'd in the niches of a stormy coast,
For nymphs, who, warbling wild seductive notes,
Lull the enchanted mariner to sleep.

ANGELI. Oh! do not enter:—It perchance contains
Adders, or serpents, wolves, or famish'd eagles.—

ANG. Fair Angelina, can thy bosom know
Such groundless fears as these?—Ah!—Tell me whence—

ANGELI. Nay—do not chide me, Angelo:—yet if
Fate and misfortune have decreed it so,
Chide as thou wilt, but do not venture there.
Nay—I entreat thee:—On my knees I beg:
Oh! If thou love me, grant this one request!—

Ang. My Angelina!—Cease these terrors wild.
Hemm'd, as we are, on every side, we turn—

Angel. Ah!—but, my Angelo, it looks so wild;—
If there thou go, some hidden power within
Will tear thee from me:—If thou enter there,
I ne'er shall see thy form, belov'd, again.

Ang. See!—Yonder cloud portends a coming storm
These rocks afford no shelter;—not a hut
Adorns these sterile solitudes with smoke,
Curling in peaceful volumes.—Sit thee there.

Angeli. My dearest Angelo—

Ang.—The storm begins
In yonder valley:—See!—The lunar bow
[*A lunar rainbow.*
Stretches from side to side.—Some shelter must be found!

Angel. Dost thou persist?—Then I will enter too.—
Thy fate is mine, whatever it may be.

Ang. No!—I entreat.—Sit there till I return.

[*Angelo is about to enter the cave;—but returns hastily.*)

We must away!—destruction lurks within.—
[*Exeunt.*

Enter Albanio.

Alb. Their merriment disturbs me;—and, indulg'd
Too long, will drown, perhaps, their thoughts of vengeance.
I'll summon them to rest!—
[*Blows his bugle.—Spalatro and the troop issue confusedly from the cave.*

The banquet over, time, with drowsy wand,
Lulls the grey eve, and woos to short repose.
Now let each comrade travel to his bed :—
These hollow rocks abound in shaggy moss,
Equal to beds of down, for Nature's hardy sons.
[*Troops disperse.—Some climb up the rocks; others lie down at their feet.*
Mine be the station, that commands the bay,
O'erlook'd by huge Vesuvius.—Brother!—Brother!—
[*To Spalatro.*
Last night I saw strange visions, as I slept.
Francisca beckon'd me!—I heard a voice
Cry, "Murder,"—"Rescue,"—"Fury,"—and
"Revenge!"—
And then I saw Manfredi torn by serpents:
And then I thought, they curl'd along the ground,
Until they crept into a yawning cave,
And made its hollow womb resound with hisses.
Nay—do not speak:—We have no prophets now,
To tell the meaning of such horrid dreams.
Marvel—but doubt not.—Polydore!—good night:
Good night, my comrades; sleep ye well till morn.
[*The troops murmur affectionate applause, as Albanio retires, accompanied by Spalatro and a part of the band.*

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

A wilderness, lying between the camp of Alfonso *and the rocks of* Albanio. Fontano *and* Scipio *asleep, by the side of a waterfall.*

Enter Angelo *and* Angelina.

Angeli. OH! what a sad and awful night is this?
There seems no limit to our dangers: list!
List—how soft music swells upon the gale!
Now all is silence.—Hark! It swells again:
Rising and falling with the buoyant wind.

Ang. I've heard it long. Albanio's troop I fear!
We must away; or ruin will o'ertake us!

Angeli. Whither, oh! whither shall we fly?—
again? (*Sounds approach.*)
Ah!—dearest Angelo—sure heaven deserts us!

Ang. Lean on this arm, thou persecuted maid;
While life remains, no power shall force thee from me.

Angeli. Let, let us fly. I dare delay no longer.
[*Exeunt.*

SCI. (*waking.*) Signor! Signor! I heard music, Signor. I heard it in my sleep. (*Wakes Fontano.*

FON. What means all this, my Scipio?

SCI. I am sure, I do not know, Signor: but I will step out, if you please, and see if I can discover where, and what it is.

(*After looking about some time, he runs hastily to Fontano.*)

Oh! Signor! Signor! I see a whole army of soldiers coming this way.

FON. An army of soldiers, Scipio?

SCI. Yes, Signor, a whole army of soldiers.

(*Music.*)

Enter ALFONSO, CLAUDIA, SCIOLTO, *and an* OFFICER.

ALF. Remain ye there! At present come no further.

CLAU. What do we here, my most illustrious Lord?

ALF. Retire thee, Claudia, to yon spreading olive.

Nay—nay—no questions:—I will soon be with thee.
Follow this Signor: 'tis the hour of danger:
Guard her with hero's care.—Farewell—farewell.

CLAU. (*Aside.*) 'Tis most mysterious!—But my will obeys. [*Exit with Officer.*

ALF. This way he travelled; but we meet him not.

(*They search about.*)

SCI. (*After peeping out, in a whisper to Fontano.*) Here are two rich cavaliers, Signor: let me beg some

money of them; for our stock is very low, and Venice is a long, long, way off.

(*Scipio goes out, and pulls off his hat to Sciolto.*)

I'm hungry, thirsty, cold, and poor,
Obliged to beg from door to door;
No cot have I to lay my head,
Nor mother's care to give me bread.
Mid hail and rain, in frost and snow,
The sport of all the winds that blow,
Forlorn I rove, from day to day,
Along this rough and rugged way:
Oh! Signors, do bestow upon
Affliction's poor deserted son,
One little gift to help him on.

Sciol. Thou art a most eloquent little beggar, whoever thou art, and I am inclined to give thee a ducat for thine eloquence; but thou must, first of all, tell me, whether thou hast seen a blind gentleman travelling this way?

Sci. A blind gentleman? Have you any business with him, Signor?

Sciol. What matters it to thee, whether I have business with him or not?

Sci. Scipio has as much right to ask that question, as you have to ask, whether he has seen a blind gentleman travelling this way?

Alf. One would think, thou wert born in England, thou free-thinker and free-speaker! Well, then, we have business with him;—and there is a ducat for thine information.

SCI. (*refusing the money.*) Is your business with him good or bad, Signor? For I would not tell you, if I thought, you meant him any harm.

ALF. Thou art the noblest beggar, that I ever saw; and as thou confer'st nobility on thy profession, I will tell thee:—our business is good.

SCI. (*to Sciolto.*) Is that true, Signor?

SCIOL. True as the moon.

SCI. True as the moon!—Ah!—but the moon, they say, wanders about all the year round, and is constant to nothing.

ALF. True, then, as thine own honesty!

SCI. That's sworn like a true and gallant Signor. Now I know, you will not deceive me: but, first of all, tell me his name.

SCIOL. Signor Fontano.

FON. (*coming forward.*) Who seeks Fontano?

ALF. (*to Sciolto.*) This is most fortunate!
What a calm dignity his visage wears!
I must endeavour to disguise my voice.—
(*To Fontano.*) And art thou here, thou great and injured man?
This is far better, than my hopes had whisper'd,
E'en to my fancy,
(*To Sciolto.*) Now I'll try him!—Mark!
Claudia and stern Manfredi swear, he's *guilty*.
Cavallo whispers, he is *innocent*. Observe!
If he prove guilty:—why—his treacherous head
Is not a ducat's worth.—(*To Fontano.*)—Most noble Signor!
I pay thee all the homage of a friend.

Fon. To whom, oh Signor, am I thus indebted,
For this unsought, unmerited, respect?

Alf. Albanio.

Fon. Who?—Albanio?—He who vows
Eternal hatred to his native city?

Alf. The same.

Sciol. (*to Alfonso.*) He answers, as if innocent.

Alf. That may be artifice.—My noble Signor!
Thine injuries demand revenge!—Revenge!
Give me thy sanction and assistance then:
March with my troops:—thine honourable name
Alone would raise an army in my cause.

Fon. Rather than do so, I would lingering die,
Ah!—inch by inch!—Chain'd to a pointed rock,
The hungry vulture, or the famished eagle,
Should tear my entrails.—What?—Eternal shame!
Conspire against my country?

Alf. 'Gainst thy country?
Has not thy country thrown thee from its bosom?

Fon. It has, it has!—Yet must love it still
My country?—Yes, while one declining stone
Lies tottering on another; while thy fields
Blush with their purple vineyards; and thy rocks
Lift up their spires to heaven: oh, use me—use me
E'en as thou wilt; oppress me thick with wrongs;
Load me with taunts;—make me a monument
Of public scorn, and I will love thee still!
And, as I beg from door to door, call down
The choicest gifts of bounteous heaven upon thee!

Sciol. Has not Manfredi robb'd thine eyes of light?

FON. He has—he has!
ALF. Did not thy sovereign, too,
Consent to that most horrible transaction?
FON. (*mournfully.*) He did—he did!—
ALF. And wilt thou not revenge?
SCIOL. And did not Claudia—
Dost thou know?—Thy daughter—
FON. My daughter?—What?—What of my daughter?—speak—
ALF. And canst thou not have heard it then?
FON. Oh, speak—
Tell me—oh, quickly tell me—of my daughter!
Speak, gracious Signor—I intreat thee speak!
ALF. (*aside.*) Oh, miracle of honour!—how thy virtue
Wrings my sad bosom, for my conduct towards thee!
FON. If thou hast mercy, Signor!—
[ALFONSO *turns aside to conceal his emotion.*
SCIOL. Miserable man!
Whilst thou wert lingering in thy loathsome cell,
Returning thanks, most grateful thanks, to heaven,
It still had left thee in thy miseries,
One treasure yet, of value more than all,
Dear to thine heart;—the base, the vile, Manfredi
Devised the means to rob thee of the treasure.
FON. (*kneeling.*) O, thou eternal Father of the world,
Upon whose mercy I've relied so long;—
Whose matchless power, the earth, the air, the skies,
The universe demonstrate; and whose justice,

Though long delay'd, is ne'er delay'd in vain;
To thee I call for mercy in the present,
And justice in the future!—Thy dread works
I dare not scan;—thy dispensations
I will not, dare not, question!—Weak and humbled,
Let not my words offend thee!—

[*Appears lost in silent agony.*

Sci. Signor—Signor!—Signor!—

Fon. What wouldst thou, boy?

Sci. Would, that we could lie down among these rocks, Signor, and close our eyes for ever!—Oh, I could weep, Signor; but if I wept, you perhaps would weep too, and that would break my heart.

[*Hides his face in* Fontano's *robe.*

Fon. My dearest boy, I thank thee for this pity.

Alf. Could I speak comfort in this hour of woe—

Fon. I cannot, ought not, to be comforted!
My daughter!—Oh, my child!—Thine injuries
Complete my awful measure of affliction.
Fortune can do no more!—I once had hope—
Now I despair—Heaven seems to have forsa'en me!

Sci. (*weeping.*) My mother has often told me, Signor, that Heaven never entirely forsakes the good.

Fon. My dearest boy!—I pray thee, Signor, leave me.
Here will I die—I will no longer hope,
Nor struggle with my destiny.

[*Sinks down on the edge of a rock.*

Alf. Signor!—

FON. Leave me, oh leave me; add not to my griefs,
By bearing witness to my miseries.

ALF. Signor Fontano—I would whisper comfort—

FON. Who speaks of comfort to a man like me?
Banish'd my country—by my sovereign wrong'd—
Who speaks of comfort?—Am I not traduced?—
My house dishonour'd—and my daughter ruin'd?

ALF. Wilt thou not hear me, Signor? I am come
To supplicate thy pardon.

FON. (*impatiently.*) I'll not hear!
—And yet, Albanio, I must tell thee, that,
In this thy war against thy native country,
Thou dost offend both God and man!—The power,
That rules the destinies of men and kingdoms,
Visits that crime more heavily than murder.—
Quit, then, thy course of ruin!—I can love
None, who forsake their country;—and admire
None, who presume her errors to revenge.
No!—when our country loves us not, return
Grief for her hate; but let no arm be raised,
Against the blind injustice of her will.
Who loves his passions better than his country,
Deserves full measure of his country's hate!

ALF. Heaven!—What a noble patriot have I ruin'd!

SCIOL. Signor Fontano—'tis thy king that speaks.

ALF. I come, Fontano, to entreat thy pardon.
Tell me, thou noble and much injured man,
Canst thou forgive?

FON. My king?—It is a dream!
My fancy wanders, and my ears deceive me!

Alf. Ah! no, Fontano—'tis thy sovereign bends.
These tears respect: forgive me, if thou canst!

Fon. Thrice honour'd master!—dearly valued friend!—
I've loved thee ever with an ardent zeal:
I know thy nature:—thou hast been deceived.
Let us, then, lose all memory of the past
From this sweet hour.

Alf. I clasp thee to my heart.

Fon. But I am guilty of a crime to feel
One ray of joy, while yet my daughter lives,
And does not live for me.

Alf. She does!—She does!—
She lives for thee, and all the world beside;
Fair as the spring, and pure as driven snow.
Rescued, by Angelo, from lawless power
Of unchaste love, among these rocks she strays,
(As penitent Cavallo tells me), led
Led by the hand of Angelo; whom you,
And I, and all th'admiring world, shall love.

Fon. Ye gracious powers!—Oh!—this is joy indeed!—
Could I but press to this long-aching heart,
My lovely Angelina—

Alf. (*To the Guards*). To the camp
Of stern Albanio, now direct your course.

Fon. Seek, seek my daughter!—Should Albanio's troops
Behold her wandering, all is lost for ever.
Oh!—seek my daughter—spare a father's tears!

ALF. Thy tears are mine!—(*To Guards.*)—And as ye march along,
Let every eye be watchful. He, who first
Espies the noble wanderers, shall receive
A rich reward from me.

FON. And what is more—
A father's grateful thanks!—Let, let us fly:
A father's haste would far outstrip the wind!

ALF. Yet ere we go, I would fair Claudia see.
(*To Sciolto.*) She journey'd with us: lead us to the shade,
Beneath which she reposes. Come, Fontano,
Lean on this arm——

FON. I have a father's fears!
Albanio's troops——

ALF. Anticipate no ill.
Heaven bears its character for justice still!

SCI. (*Chagrined at Fontano's taking the arm of Alfonso.*)

Nay!—let me lead thee, Signor, pray:—
Each sylph, and sylphid,—fairy,—fay,
Or, by what name soe'er ye call
The nymphs, who guard this waterfall;
Proclaim, that, whether strait or wide
The path meanders,—I'M THY GUIDE!
And, though thy king desires to see;
Thy guide has been, and still must be,
To lead thee, where thou want'st to go,
The wild—but faithful—Scipio.

(*Takes Fontano's hand, and insists upon leading him.*)

Fon. Excellent boy!—The world has not thy peer!
[*Exeunt.*

Enter Manfredi (*cautiously*) *from behind.*

Curst be the hour, I e'er beheld the sun
And curst the hour, that gave my mother birth!
May the earth open; may the mountains fall;
And crush Fontano, and Albanio, too,
In one deep wreck of ruin.———————
What have these eyes beheld? Fontano clasp'd,
Firm in the king's embrace! Curst be the man,
Who saw me floating in my watery bed,
Dragg'd me to shore, and took me to his hut,
Reared on the craggy margin of the torrent.—
Vile, senseless, fool! I hate thee for thy pains.
What shall I do?—And whither shall I fly?
Outcast of nature! Stay—Albanio's camp
Lies at the feet of yon gigantic mountains.
———— The thought is masterly;—
I'll ruin him again! And on his ruin
Exalt myself.
[*Drawing some keys and a dagger from under his robe.*
These keys—this dagger—oh!
It is a paradise of thought! Disguise
Thy face and figure, too, Manfredi.—Yes! 'tis done.
Some berries, and a bending frame, shall screen
Albanio's enemy. I breathe again!
And dare thee, Fortune, to thy utmost hate. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

ALBANIO, *sitting in a meditative posture. Part of his army lying asleep, in detached groupes, around him. He comes forward and sits upon a jutting crag.*

ALB. Music has lulled these iron hearts to rest!
But mine shall never more be soothed to sleep,
Till yon proud city smokes beneath its ruins.—
Again!—it pleases, though it soothes me not;—again!

[*Music:—soon after interrupted by vivid flashes of lightning:—Music continues till the lightning is followed by a violent thunder storm.*

The angry storm subsides at last!—
Full many a year, upon this rocky coast,
I've watched the warring elements; while these,
More happy far than me, lie lock'd in sleep;
But ne'er, till now, have I been greeted with
Such dismal wailings, as these rocks sublime,
This night have echo'd from their secret caves.
Oh! I could wish to see this piteous world
Crumble to atoms!—And the hideous noise
Of its crude elements would charm my ear,
Like softest music, which, I've oft times heard,
Lulls the sad soul of anguish to repose.—

[*Music resumes.*

In what deep silence wave yon clouds of jet.
Mark, how the moon-beams gild their shadowy skirts:

[*The dark clouds glide gradually away; the moon shines brilliantly; and the whole of Mount Vesuvius is seen towering in the perspective.*

How glorious!—Lo!—Vesuvius appears!—
Itself a planet.—Towering o'er the vale,
It gives new grandeur to sublimity.—
Magnificent!—Oh Nature!—How thy works
Dissolve my soul in holiest admiration!—
[*Loud peals of thunder.*
Roll on, ye heralds of omnipotence;—
Roll to the utmost limit of the spheres.
And you, ye lightnings, guide me on my way
To yon proud towers.—But spare the time-worn walls:
Rob not my soul of vengeance:—'tis mine own.
What? Can ye sleep, my comrades?—Well; sleep on.
Would I could sleep as well!—The thunder roars
Harsh music to harsh bosoms; but to me—
It breathes soft, melancholy, music.—Oh!—
There was a time—How wild the volumes roll!
Echoing from one deep valley to another:—
Now dying in faint murmurs.—Hush'd the scene!
So dies each tumult of an injured spirit;
When hope has lull'd each passion into peace.
—Mine ne'er will rest, till death has closed the scene!
[*Relapses into melancholy.*

Angelo, *supporting* Angelina, *appears on one of the cliffs above.*

Alb. What's this I see, on yonder cliff?—a youth! Bearing a fainting woman in his arms.
Carlo!—Spalatro!—Polydore!—awake!—
How can ye sleep amid this warring uproar?
[*The troops start up, and fly to their arms.*

Spal. Who's there?—what danger?—

Cap. Signor—didst thou call?—

ALB. See ye not yonder fine-form'd maid, that leans,
Weak and exhausted, on her lover's breast?—
Fly to their aid:—why fly ye not to succour?

[CARLO, *and several of the troop, climb to the spot; and, after some difficulty, succeed in leading Angelo and Angelina down the precipice.—Angelo comes forward, Angelina clinging to his robe.*

ANG. Fortune has cast me in so many dangers,
Most noble chief, that I would well consent,
No more to buffet her tumultuous stream;
Did I not feel, for this affrighted maid,
More pangs, than death has power to bestow.

ALB. (*Aside*)—A noble pair!—and worthy of each other.

ANG. If thou hast ever felt the bitter pang
Of ill requited service;—ever seen
A faithful friend, that every secret knew,
Which prisoned in thine heart, accused, disgraced,
Cast in a dungeon;—from that dungeon freed,
Only to wander into banishment,
An unknown outcast—

ALB. (*Aside with great emotion.*)
Thou hast touched the chord!—
And yet I fear, that he was born in Naples!

ANG. ——— But ah!—
If love hath ever fired thy manly breast,
And innocence has answered thine entreaty,
With the soft rapture of requiting love;

With heart,—all beating,—thy benignant hand
Will stretch, with pleasure, to assist this Angel.

Alb. Guard them, ye Powers!—My conscience sinks within me.—

Ang. O'erwhelm'd by fortune,—trembling under pangs
Of home remembered, friends, and parents too;
Fainting with hunger; sinking with fatigue;
We ask thee nothing, but a little food,
To quell our hunger; and the meanest bed
To rest our weary frames.—Oh!—do not tremble!
Lean on this arm, my Angelina.—Signor!
This maid is fainting with fatigue:—I charge thee,
Shew her thy pity.—

Alb. *(To Angelina.)*—Fairest maid, this youth
Speaks to the heart.—But I forget my oath!
(*To Angelo.*)—As thou dost value life, and what is more,
This maid's possession,—answer me with truth.
——— Art thou from Naples?—(*A pause.*)
(*Aside.*) I do entreat, that he may answer "No."
Stay—I'll not ask him:—No!—I will not ask him!
—Thou'rt born in Florence—yes—I know thou wert!—
I saw thee there some eighteen months ago—

Ang. In Florence?—No!—In Naples I was born.

Alb. Ye powers!—I fear'd as much!—Now for my oath
I wish I had not sworn!
——————— I wish I had not sworn!—
(*After a pause.*)—Dost know Albanio?

ANG. HE, who on the night
Of sacred marriage, massacred his wife?
Who fled?—who wars upon his native city?
I know his name too well!—

ALB. Ye sons of darkness!—
Heard ye not that?—He strikes the chord of madness.
No pity now shall lull me into mercy.—
Carlo!—Spalatro!—Bind this youth of Naples;
Bind him with bonds, and seer his flowing locks—

ANGELI. Oh chief! I do entreat thee to forbear.
What has he done?—What uttered to offend?
What he has said, I pledge a virgin's word,
Is sacred truth.—Outcasts, indeed, we are:
Fall'n from as high estate, as fortune grants
To any lord in Naples.—Tell me, then,
What he has done, that draws this sudden flash
Of wildest anger, from thy threatening eye?

ALB. Did he not say, that he was born in Naples?
A state, I have resolved, on oath, to ruin;
And every son, that comes within my power!

ANG. Unnatural fiend!—Oh, worse than leopard born!

ALB. (*to Angelina.*) Did he not say, Albanio fled his country?
Murdered his wife?—He said it—yes, he said it!—
Deny ye that?—Said he not that?—

ANG. Albanio?

ALB. ALBANIO?—Yes!—The FUGITIVE and MURDERER!
I AM ALBANIO; and I love the name;
Though I abhor the practice of your charge.
Bear, bear him hence, ye pausing idle crew:

Take him and hurl him from yon pointed brow,
That peaked summit, called "Albanio's Rock!"

Angeli. Oh, on my bended knees—

Alb. Avaunt—avaunt!
No, no!—they neither heard, nor pitied, me!
None, born in Naples, therefore, shall receive
One ray of hope from me.

Ang. I've heard of tigers,
Lions, and panthers—but I never yet
Read of a monster, who did hate the land,
Which gave him birth, with such a hate as thine!—

Alb. I care not what thou'st read.—Albanio is
Albanio's self:—let that suffice for Naples!
Damn'd and insidious race,—how I abhor ye!
Holding me guilty of a crime, so foul,
As wed a wife, and stab her to the heart,
Deserves that famine, pestilence, and war
Should visit ye for ages.

Ang. (*to Angelina, pointing to heaven.*)
——————— Look up, my angel!
Mid yon bright globes our consolation rests!

Angeli. They shall not part us!—We will die together.

Alb. (*impatiently.*) Take—take him hence, and hurl him on the strand;
While hated Naples bleeds at every pore

Angeli. Ah! do not tear him from these eyes away!
I ne'er can bear so sad a separation.
Take me—take me—but let that youth still live:
I'd bear ten thousand tortures for his sake.

[*As they prepare to lead Angelo off the stage, Angelina endeavours to follow, but is prevented.*

ANG. (*to troop.*) Away—away!—One last embrace, my love!—

ALB. Begone!—(*aside.*) Or this rough bosom may relent.

ANGELI. Oh, let me follow:—Monsters, let me go!—
Look at him—see—ah, how can ye refuse
Th' expressive grandeur of those speaking eyes?
Stay, good Albanio—I intreat thy mercy;—
Let me but follow, and I'll bless thy name,
E'en in the hour of death!—

[*He turns from her with an air of softened dignity.*

ANG. Farewell—farewell —

[*They tear him away.*

ANGELI. Off, off, ye miscreants:—do not hold me thus!
Angelo—Angelo!—my dearest Angelo!—

[*Faints.*

ALB. (*to troop.*) Leave me, oh leave me.—Send Marcella hither. [*Troops exeunt.*

[*Albanio brings Angelina to the front of the stage, and holds her upon his knee. He bends over her, and becomes softened by her beauty.*

ALB. How fair, how lovely!—In all nature's works,
A form, more lovely, never met my sight.
She almost tempts me to forego my hate;
But I have sworn, and will not be subdued.—

[*Pauses, and looks at her with emotion.*

Has beauty, then, the power to charm me still?
Fortune!—Thou hast, for many a weary year,
Singled me out to be thine instrument;
On which to play thy melancholy airs;

And used me, as a discord.—Tell me, then,
Mysterious harmonist, is this sweet creature
Cast in my way to smooth these rugged brows,
So wrinkled by my sorrows; and to soothe
The jarring fibres of my gloomy soul?
No—I disdain thy boon!—Francisca lives!—
Lives in my heart!—her sainted spirit lives
In regions pure. Who sent her there?—'Twas *I!*—
Yes—Naples swears it was Albanio sent her;—
Stabb'd with a poignard!—Oh, revenge, revenge!
The time is coming;—nay, the time is come.

Enter Marcella *and* Carlo.

Take this fair maid;—and use thy best design,
To calm the anguish of her wounded breast.—
Soothe her torn heart—I war not with a woman.

Mar. Come, my sweet innocent, I will not harm thee!

Car. (*in an under tone.*) Poor lady!—E'en this savage bosom feels
To witness thy distress. [*Exeunt, bearing Angelina.*

Alb. Away—away!
Say, Naples, how my vengeance can display
Proofs of envenomed hate, more full than this?
The youth is noble, and the maid is lovely;
Both form'd in Nature's most exalted mood.
The nobler, and more lovely, be the victims;
The better, firmer, ranker, my revenge.
"Revenge is virtue!"—Is it?—No, ye're false,
Who cry, "Revenge is virtue!"—But my oath—
My oath doth make me war against my reason.

And yet—(*in a sudden paroxysm.*) Oh, the vile race
of miscreants!—Yes—
Have they not warr'd?—They've warr'd on me for
years.
He says, I murder'd my sweet, innocent, wife!—
Oh! that the father of yon boundless deep
Would change his figure to a towering cliff,
Round which the waves might tyrannize for ages.
[*Exit.*

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.

A Forest.

Claudia, *reclining under an Olive Tree, attended by several Officers.*

She comes forward, meditating.

Clau. WHY I was left in this wild forest thus,
I cannot yet divine. Alfonso told me,
He came to watch the motions of Albanio.
Strange mode of watching! Ah! I fear, I fear,
More is design'd, than suited him to say.
Manfredi, too! I'd give the world to see him.
What says his letter?—Thou mysterious slave!
" A Woodman saved me from drowning. I have
" seen what has ruined me."
Seen what has ruined thee? There's much in this.
" Albanio's camp shall be my court awhile."
Albanio's camp? Why sure the man is mad!
" Albanio's camp shall be my court awhile.
" In which if I succeed ———." (*Flourish.*)
(*Puts up the letter hastily.*)

What's this? The king! I tremble at my shadow.

Enter ALFONSO, SCIOLTO, *and a multitude of Officers.* FONTANO *and* SCIPIO *remain in the back ground.*

CLAU. My lord! I joy to see thee thus return'd!
Fontano's treachery—but why frowning thus?
Nay—I entreat thee. Why, alas! thine eye
So wildly rolls on Claudia—had she done
Some monstrous crime, oh! never couldst thou look
More wildly or more frightfully.—Explain.—
(*The King remains silent: Sciolto and Officers observe Claudia with anxious attention.*)
My lords!—can you expound this mystery?
What have I done to merit these wild frowns?

ALF. Thou hast dissolved, thou traitress, all the ties,
Which bound me to thee! On this spot I vow,
Never to hold communion with thee more.
Nay—speak not; I'll not listen to thy tongue.
Cavallo told me all. I came—I proved—
And found Fontano honest as the day.

CLAU. Alfonso, hear! In spite of all these frowns,
I will be heard. 'Tis true! What thou hast heard
Is to the letter true! And as the crime
Is of a nature, that it mocks compare,
I will not stoop t'extenuate. Do thy worst.

ALF. Unhappy Claudia! I blush for thee,
With mingled blushes of reproach and shame.
Within a convent's consecrated walls,
Perchance, thy soul may learn the sacred hope,
Which penitence can give. Sciolto!

Sciol. Lord!

Alf. I charge thee with the ministry of this.
Deep in a valley—near the rocky base
Of yon proud eminence—a convent stands,
Bosom'd in wood. I charge thee to convey
This guilty lady to its cloistered walls.

Clau. (*Impatiently.*) I am most ready, Signor, to attend thee.
Move on! Since fate ordains it, I submit;
E'en with a willing conscience. Lead the way.

Alf. Claudia, alas! I cannot quit thee thus,
And yet refuse to grant thee my forgiveness.
Would that heaven's pardon were as easy won!

Clau. And does thine anger, then, subside so soon?
Why is thy face so calm? Thy words so mild?
I like them not. Recall, and give me harsher!
Pour down those epithets, that suit me more:
These words unnerve me, for they wound my pride;
They wound me every way. Oh! curse me! curse me!—

Alf. No! much as thou hast wrong'd me, I'll not wound
Thy guilty feelings more. I can but feel,
That once I lov'd thee with a lover's weakness;
And that though fall'n, degraded, as thou art,
I feel degraded too! So fare—thee—well!

(*Sciolto goes up to Claudia.*)

Clau. (*in an under tone.*) Whither, Sciolto, whither would'st thou lead me?
I'm going a journey, Signor, whither thou

One day wilt journey too. Now lead the way.
I'm not without a friend—a faithful friend,
And which, ere long, shall hide me from myself!
[*Exit with Sciolto.*

ALF. Farewell—with that farewell, would I could lose
All memory of thee! *(A shriek without.)*
What wild shriek was that? Sciolto—Claudia?

Re-enter SCIOLTO *bearing* CLAUDIA.

SCIOL. She's done a deed, I have no power to tell:
Look on this hand, still grasping firm the dagger.

ALF. What hast thou done, unhappy Claudia?—Ah!—
Did I not tell thee, I forgave thee all?
Why dost thou, therefore, tempt th' Eternal thus,
And render every hope of his forgiveness,
Still more remote and difficult to gain?

CLAU. Oh!—I have sinned beyond the wish of life;
Beyond the hope of pardon!—Oh Alfonso!
On the dark margin of eternity,
I feel myself a coward. Almighty Father!
Thy mercy is most infinite indeed,
If thou canst pardon such a wretch as I.

ALF. Oh! lay thine head upon this pitying breast.

CLAU. Hide me, oh! hide me:—'twas Fontano's voice,
Where is thy daughter? She is ruin'd—yes!
Manfredi ruin'd her, and I her father.
Manfredi?—Viper!—Viper!—Viper!—What,

Cavallo too?—Begone!—Oh save me—save me.

(*Dies in the arms of Sciolto.*)

Alf. Why have I liv'd to such an hour as this?
So rich in wealth, in power, in dignity,
To be thus indigent in happiness,
Is much, too much, for this sad breast to bear!

(*Cavallo comes slowly from behind; and, after gazing some little time on Claudia, bursts into tears.*)

Cav. How could I wrong my children and myself,
In such a cause as this? Did I not owe
A heavier debt, than I can ever pay,
To them, to injured justice, and to heaven,
I'd not survive thee!—Oh! my dearest babes—
How will ye meet the cruel eyes of scorn,
With which the world will visit ye?——

[*Exit.*

Alf. (*To Sciolto.*) Bear her to Naples; give a tear to weakness:
And on her fate be all for ever silent.

(*Attendants exeunt with Claudia.*)

Fontano *and* Scipio *come forward.*

Fon. My liege!

Alf. I thank thee for this sympathy.
Ah—good Fontano—'tis a just decree,
That disappointment, misery, and pain,
Should breathe infection over lawless passion.

Fon. Ah!—what a lesson does this scene convey!

(*Scipio, seeing Alfonso give way to strong emotion, goes up to him.*)

SCI. Nay—do not sigh, my sovereign lord!
My master says, that every word,
And every sigh, unjustly given,
Are entered in the book of heaven.
And oft I've heard my mother say,
The time will come—oh! blissful day!—
When sighs and tears are wip'd away.
Then do not weep. Let Claudia die;
She was not worth a single sigh!
——— But there is one ———
In yonder wild and rocky grove,
The maiden and her lover rove.
Oh!—do—my sovereign lord, impart
Some comfort to my master's heart!
He ne'er can sleep, till they are found:
Then let us search the woods around:
Come! Let us search each dale and hill;
I, too, can never sleep, until
My noble master's heart is still.

ALF. Surely this earth has never yet beheld
A being like thee!

FON. 'Tis my guardian angel!

SCI. But look, Signor. Who is that, coming hither so fast, that he seems, as if he were ready to fall at every step?

Enter CARLO, *breathless.*

CARLO. The king! the king! which is the king, Alfonso?

ALF. I am the king!—Thine errand Signor?—speak.

Carlo. Angelo!—Angelina!—They will die!—
Albanio, he has seized them! they will die—
I can no more.

Fon. Mysterious Heaven, receive me!

[*Falls into the arms of Alfonso and Sciolto.*

Sci. Oh, my poor master!—Oh, my dearest master. [*Weeping.*

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Albanio's Rock. Troops in the back ground.

Albanio *walking, to and fro, in great agitation.*

Alb. The world is all my enemy!—
Untouch'd, unsullied, I was once a Man:
Not in the form and symmetry alone,
But in the heart.—I once could breathe a sigh,
E'en at the touch of music;—press the hand
Of proffer'd friendship;—give a toy to children;
Join in their sports, and coin a smile at will.
But this curs'd charge has turn'd me to a tiger,
Without a tiger's reasoning!—I could love—
And yet I hate mankind. Oh, if the world
Would shed one tear of pity for my fate,—
Yes! I could love it still.—But ah, vile thought!
—But winds are weary of my imprecations!
Is all prepared?—

Spa. The youth with bonds is bound.

Enter Polydore, *leading in* Manfredi, *in disguise.*

Spa. What, ho!—Who art thou?

MANF. Lead me to thy chief.
(*Aside*) He cannot recognize this tarnished face,
And bending frame.—My mother would not know me!
ALB. (*walking up to him, with a haughty air.*)
Whence didst thou come, and whither wouldst thou travel?—
What is thine errand?—Art thou friend or foe?
MANF. A friend.
ALB. From whence?
MANF. From Naples.
ALB. Ah?—A friend from Naples?
Jewels from serpents! doves from leopards' dens!
Honey from spiders!—Yet a friend thou may'st be:—
The age of miracles has long since passed:
But it may come again; and thou, perhaps, the prophet.
Thy name?
MANF. Marcello.
ALB. 'Tis a noble name
Thine errand?
MANF. Naples is thine own.
ALB. How?—What?—All Naples?—
MANF. Bends beneath thy frown.
ALB. (*blows his bugle; the troops form themselves into a semicircle, from one side of the stage to the other.*)
Friends, comrades, brothers! here's a noble chief,
Sprung from the loins o great Marcello, come,
To give a limit to our labours. Speak!—
MANF. All Naples and her sons—
ALB. Speak—speak ye loud,
That all my friends may hear.—I pray you listen.

Manf. I've paved the way: Lord Angelo is banish'd:
Fontano's eyes are withered; and Alfonso—

Alb. What of the king?

Manf. He dies by this right hand,
If 'tis Albanio's will.

Alb. And what of Naples?

Manf. Naples too shall fall.

Alb. Oh, thou'rt a spirit of great power indeed!
Naples shall fall:—But what the instruments?

Manf. Myself—these treasures.—Yes, the city falls

Alb. (*with an air of piercing investigation.*) By force or treachery?

Manf. Which Albanio wills.
These are the keys of Naples.

[*Placing them in Albanio's hand.*

Alb. Well,—I have them!
Now for Alfonso.

Manf. Here's a poisoned dagger—

Alb. Whose is 't?

Manf. 'Tis mine.

Alb. And what thy rich reward,
For these important services?

Manf. Fontano
Now scorns my power; Cavallo has betrayed me;
Fontano's daughter has been rescued,
E'en at a time, I thought possession sure.—

Alb. (*impatiently.*) The price—the price?

Manf. Fontano's head: The head of Angelo:
The gift of Lady Angelina's person.

Alb. Fontano's head? The head of Angelo?
The ift of Lady Angelina's person?—

——— Yes! I hate ye ———
E'en to the child unborn, ye sons of Naples!
Hate ye to my heart's core! My comrades, mark!
These are the keys of that detested city,
Whose charge against me, ye remember well.
—If Naples is to fall, it shall not fall by me,
If fraud must be the instrument. The dagger!
(*In a half whisper.*) Where is the dagger? (*Manfredi gives it him.*) Poisoned?—Well! now mark!
Amid the hated sons of hated Naples,
One stands pre-eminent—his name, MANFREDI.
'Tis many a month since I have seen him; and
His visage is so bloated with his fortune,
That now I should not know him. To Manfredi,
When thou dost traverse the vast fields of hell,
Arm within arm, I charge thee bear this message.
Tell him, that though I hated him, when living,
As lambs hate wolves, my eager hate to Naples,
Far, far, exceeded all my hate to him.
HE knows me pure; NAPLES believes me guilty.
Tell him, that though I hated both, as hell,
I hated traitors more. Thy lips are traitor's lips!

MANF. (*drawing a dagger, secretly, from under his robe.*) 'Tis well I steep'd two daggers in the poison!
My plan, then, suits thee not?—Return my dagger,
And give me back my keys.

ALB. ——— Impudent slave!
Return a poison'd dagger to a fiend,
Who has presum'd to take me for a brother?—
Did I not scorn to touch a thing, so mean,
So abject, and unutterably vile, I would—
[*Turning from him with contempt.*

Manf. (*aside.*) I slew thy wife—and now I'll ruin thee!

My heart has loath'd thee from that hour, accurs'd,
In which thy wife first froze me with a look
Of silent scorn;—then gave her charms to thee.
Give me, Albanio, give me back my dagger.

Alb. Daggers to traitors! Am I wanting here?
[*Putting his finger on his forehead.*
I hate thee, reptile, for thine insolence.

Manf. It is mine own; I claim it as mine own.

[*Albanio waves his hand as a negative. Manfredi softly approaches him, and is about to stab him in the back; when Albanio turns suddenly upon him, wrests the dagger, and stabs him to the heart.*

Manf. May earthquakes swallow thee!—

Alb. Now let the poison travel through thy veins,
Palsy thy nerves, and melt into thy marrow!—

Manf. Fiend—Fiend of fortune! thou hast slain Manfredi!

Alb. (*Looking at him, as if he distrusted his own evidence.*)
No!—I'll not trust the evidence of sight!—
Manfredi?—'tis impossible!—the fiend
At Naples is.—And yet that lowering eye,
Arch'd with malignant wrinkles, never can
Deform another face than his.—It is—it is—
[*With savage ecstasy.*
It is Manfredi;—'tis Manfredi's self!—

Troop. Manfredi?

Alb. Yes!—Manfredi!—

Now may yon sky rain daggers if it will.—

SPAL. Leave him to us, Signor, leave him to us.—

[*Manfredi falls.*—

ALB. See! how the poison operates upon him!
Die, traitor, die; and take thy flight to hell.—
Look down, Francisca, I've reveng'd thy cause.
Now for mine own!—The hated youth shall die,
Since he believes me guilty like the rest.
Murder my wife?—My soul! my soul! my soul!
Ha! what a vile, detested, miscreant, race,
To credit such a tale!—Bear out the fiend;
And let his limbs so poison all the air,
That wolves and kites may in the gorging die.

[*They bear out the body of Manfredi.*

(*To Spalatro, in a half whisper.*)—What think ye now?
Dost think my mind diseas'd?

SPAL. He, that thinks that, deserves the name for folly.—

ALB. Ye mighty powers!————
Why have ye humbled thus my towering pride?
What? Have ye made me, only to be victim
To the vile craft of such a fiend as this?—
A wretch so low, that, wearing human form,
Makes me to loathe the figure of a man.
Oh! Fortune!—arrogant and insolent!—
This is too much.—But I'll revenge my cause:
And turn this insult on the towers of Naples.

(He walks about in a disordered manner.—Troops are seen leading Angelo to the edge of a rock, and stand prepared to hurl him into the sea.)

Soldier. All is now ready, Signor.

Poly. Signor!—

Spal. Peace!—He's disorder'd.—See ye how he smiles?

I never saw him smile e'en once before!

Signor, the youth of Naples is before you!

Alb. (*Starting.*) Where?

Ang. (*With a loud voice.*) Here!—

Alb. Godlike in form, but demon in thy speech!

Demon! to charge me with Francisca's murder.

(*To Spalatro.*) Charg'd he not so?—Truth blushes 'mid thy frowns.—

He did! He did! He is Manfredi's brother.

Angeli. (*Without.*) Where is Albanio?—tell me where he is!

Ang. Eternal Heav'n!—I feel a thousand pangs

In every moment, I'm allow'd to live!—

[Angelina *rushes in, in a wild and distracted manner.*

Angeli. Where is Albanio?—Is Albanio here?

(*Seeing Albanio she stops, and assumes an air of dignity.*)

And canst thou, dreadful minister of wrath,

Dar'st thou thus tamper with the lives of men?

Hast thou no dread of that avenging spirit,

That on the whirlwind of the frozen North,

Rides through the welkin of this lower world,

And hurls destruction on the tyrant's head?—

Alb. No!—I have not. I fear no powers of earth,

Nor powers of air.—I scorn them all, but one:

And she has strung these sinews for revenge.—

Begone!—nor tempt me farther; lest thy pride

Brings on thy ruin too.—Begone!—Begone!
Francisca's spirit loudly cries "REVENGE!'

SPAL. Lady!—Permit me;—yonder is Marcella.—

ANGELI. Signor! Stand off.—I am no woman now.
Wrongs have unsexed me. Hear thou MAN OF BLOOD!
Hear, whilst you may! And let these purple veins
Glut, if you will, the measure of your thirst:
But spare that noble victim, lest the might
Of some avenging God should seal thy ruin.

ALB. Ruin? Away!—Ruin and I are brothers.
Hurl him, ye frantic idiots, to the shore.
Why do ye pause? I charge ye, hurl him down.
Would all the sons of Naples too were here,
That ye might hurl them to one common grave;
The grave of hatred, vengeance, and despair.
Then I could die, with ectasy, to-morrow!

ANGELI. Stay—stay your hands! I charge ye pause to hear.
Heaven ne'er will spare you, if ye spare not him.
Forbear—forbear.—Albanio! dost thou know,
That yonder youth is Nature's noblest son?
— Shouldst' thou wound him! ——
The great Eternal will avenge his cause,
And heap more woes, and ruin on thine head,
Than ever fell to one man's lot before!

ALB. Sure 'tis some spirit, that appals me thus!
A voice from heaven!—I have oft times heard,
That injured virtue has the power to call
An angel's spirit, from the gates of heaven.

ANGELI. Let not thy passions tempt thee on to ruin!
This hour—this fatal hour—alone is thine:

The next may lead thee to eternity :
And, in that dread eternity, what woes,
What woes unheard—unthought of—may assail thee.

Alb. Lady !—An oath most solemn is, and sacred.
I would not break one for an Indian mine,
Teeming with emeralds and sapphires.—

Angeli. ——————— Ah !
But Heaven, I'm sure, would pardon such an act :
Since, now to do it, constitutes a virtue.—

Alb. Did he not say, that I had stabb'd my Wife ?
Could he stab thee ?—could he, at midnight hour,
Have struck the bosom, that he rested on,
And turn its snow to crimson ?—Out !—The charge
Is second only to the deed itself.—

Angeli. Is the charge false ?—I've heard it from my childhood.—

Alb. Just Heaven ! she drives me frantic :—Is it true ?
Look on this hand ! see'st blood upon it ?—Speak.
When a man stabs, this is the fatal hand,
With which he does the deed.—See ye ought there ?

Ang. 'Tis white as snow !

Alb. I charge thee, look again.—
Not all the waters of the Atlantic waste
Could e'er have wash'd the bloody stains away, *
Had it but once been sullied with this deed.
—But what ?—what wild and sacred vision's this ?
An angel minist'ring !—Francisca's form !

* Although the waves of all the northern sea
Should flow for ages through thy guilty hands,
Yet the sanguinolent stain would extant be.
Marston. *Insatiate Countess.*

List—how rich music floats amid the spheres:—
Angel of love!—I kneel to hear thine errand. (*Kneels.*)
So soon to leave me! — Oh!—thou martyr'd angel!
See—how she floats upon the balmy air; (*rises.*)
Rising to heaven, mid pyramids of rubies!—

ANGELI. Let, let thy wife speak volumes, then, for me.—

Spare him—oh! spare him —

ALB. Polydore!—My soul—
My soul seems starting to a new existence.

ANGELI. May he then live?

ALB. What? what is life to me?
Yes! he may live, for ages, if he will;
And all that breathe;—so that Albanio dies!

ANGELI. Oh! heaven—I thank thee.—Angelo—my love!—
Thou'rt free!—thou liv'st!—I fly to loose thy chains.
[*Flies to Angelo's rock.*

(*A confused noise of distant trumpets, and a clang of arms.*)

ALB. What means this clang of arms?
[*Appears, for a short time, as if stupified; then suddenly resumes all his energy.*
——— To arms!—to arms! ———
Unsheath your swords, and shew, that ye are men!—
It is our enemy from Naples.——Charge!—
He has surpriz'd us in our secret haunts.
To arms!—to arms!—It is Albanio calls ye!
[*Enter* ALFONSO *and* SCIOLTO, *at the head of the Neapolitan troops.—A battle ensues.*—ALBANIO *throws himself into the thickest of the battle; but receiving*

a wound, and finding himself unable to make head against the assailants, he rushes forward, and throws his sword at the feet of Alfonso.—Silence *immediately ensues.*

Alb Alfonso, thou hast conquered!
Firm is thine arm, most prudent thy resolves,
And all thy plans matur'd.—I've hurl'd my sword—
To save my Comrades' blood! Hundreds must yield
To well appointed Thousands
[*After struggling with his pride, some little time, he adds in a subdued manner;*
I would ask
One favour of thee, e'er I pay the price
Of misdirected vengeance.
Alf. Speak!
Alb. My comrades—
I won them from thee!—Let the penalty
Rest then on me.—Restore them to their country.
Alf. (*After a pause.*) The boon is granted.
Alb. I return thee thanks.
Now then my life wanes swiftly to its close.—
Oh! What a dream of horror have I past!—
My mind has long been withering!—But I feel,
I feel,—alas!—too late,—that I have sinn'd,
Beyond the common measure of a crime,
To let mine anger take a range so wide.
But if I've sinn'd—Thou, also, hast transgress'd:
Witness the wise Fontano!—since
Angeli. (*Rushing from behind*). My father!
Tell me, oh tell me, where my father travels.—

FON. (*coming from the opposite side of the stage.*)
Oh heaven! I die with gratitude and joy.
It is my daughter. 'Tis my daughter's voice!

ANG. Can this be possible?

ANGELI. Ye mighty powers!
It is,—it is,—it is, indeed, my father!

[*Falls into Fontano's arms.*

FONT. My daughter! daughter! oh! my dearest daughter!

ALB. Fontano?—Angelo?—Fontano's daughter?—
Oh!—What a crime have I escaped! my mind—
My eyes seem clouded:—And my heart is broken!—
Ye men of Naples—ye've accused me long
Of murder;—foulest murder,—of my wife!

[*To Angelina in a frantic whisper.*

Yes! of my wife!—my martyr'd angel wife!
That is the charge, that has unmann'd me; stay!
Was not that cruel charge—oh! lady—lady,
Behold yon moon:—it rides triumphant;—like
The gentle angel, that Albanio loves.—
Nay—do not shrink, as if I were a monster!
I will not harm thee! All believe me guilty!—
Yes—they believe me guilty even now!
Fiend of the soul!—thy rage seems fell and endless.—
See! see! again—my angel! yes! the dagger
Still rends thy heart, and reddens all thy bosom.
Away! let no one interrupt me—hence—away!

Death is to me a paradise!—away!—
If INNOCENT to HEAVEN!—If GUILTY down to HELL.
I hear thee, Martyr!—Yes—I come—I come!
Now for life's masterpiece!

[*Stabs himself.*

THE END.

Printed by Cox and Baylis,
Great Queen Street, Lincoln's-Inn-Fields.

SELF-SACRIFICE;

OR,

THE MAID OF THE COTTAGE:

A MELO-DRAMA,

In Two Acts,

FIRST PERFORMED AT THE THEATRE ROYAL,
ENGLISH OPERA-HOUSE,

ON MONDAY, JULY 19TH, 1819.

BY G. SOANE, A.B.

AUTHOR OF UNDINE,
DWARF OF NAPLES, INNKEEPER'S DAUGHTER, FALLS OF CLYDE, THE BOHEMIAN, ROB ROY, &c. &c.

THE MUSIC BY MR. G. REEVE.

LONDON:

Printed by W. Hughes, Maiden-Lane,

FOR JOHN LOWNDES, 25, BOW-STREET, COVENT-GARDEN.

1819.

Price Two Shillings.

PREFACE.

To the individuals concerned in this Piece I have to attribute its success; but I trust it will not be thought invidious if I make more particular mention of Miss Kelly. My utmost praise will lag far behind her transcendant merits, yet the debt of gratitude must be paid to the utmost of my feeble powers; and let it be remembered, that the shrine of genius is not debased by the humbleness of the adorer. How much I owe to her talents in the execution of the part, the public can judge, but they cannot know the benefit I have reaped from her advice as a friend and a critic: the splendour of her genius finds no rival but in the innate goodness of her heart.

To Mr. T. P. Cooke I am eminently obliged for his double exertions, as an actor, and as the arranger of the Piece. His skill in either department is too well known to receive any accession of fame from my humble praise.

To Mr. Harley and Mr. Wilkinson I have to return my thanks for their exertions in very inferior parts. They only, who are well acquainted with the stage, will understand how much I am indebted to their talent and kindness.

Mr. Pearman will, I hope, accept my acknowledgments for his performance of Count Valmore; it was such as to do high credit to his professional skill, and soon satisfied the unreasonable expectations of an Author.

Of the Proprietor of the English Opera, I know not how to speak in adequate terms. His generous spirit

may, perhaps, shrink from the relation of his many acts of kindness, or the praise of his varied talents. Suffice it therefore to say, that though I came to Mr. ARNOLD a stranger, his assistance and counsel supported me in the tide of distress, that must otherwise have overwhelmed me. This occasion of acknowledging my heart-felt gratitude, is perhaps misplaced, for the general ear has little sympathy with individual good; yet the error, if error it be, may, I hope, be forgiven for the feeling in which it originates.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Count Valmore, - - - -	Mr. Pearman.
Larive, (His friend,) - - -	Mr. Kent.
Marquis Leone, - - - -	Mr. Rowbotham.
Schwitzer, (a German,) - - -	Mr. T. P. Cooke.
Schultz, (His associate,) - - -	Mr. Salter.
Eugene, (A child, son to Count Valmore,)	Miss G. Carr.
Claude, (An old Steward to Valmore,)	Mr. Lancaster.
Jean Jaques, (King of the Beggars,)	Mr. Harley.
Crank Cuffin, (A Negro Beggar,) -	Mr. Wilkinson.
Patrico of the Beggars, - - -	Mr. Huckel.
Henri, (A Beggar,) - - -	Mr. Hart.
Ida, (Daughter to the Marquis,) -	Miss Kelly.
Lisette, (A female Beggar,) - -	Miss Love.

Peasants, Attendants, Beggars, &c.

SELF-SACRIFICE;

OR,

THE MAID OF THE COTTAGE.

ACT I.

SCENE I. *A Lawn before a neat Cottage; far behind, a rustic Bridge.*

Enter Count Valmore, *crossing over the Bridge, and re-entering.*

Count. The morn is brilliant as my fancy—Oh, that the joy of this hour could last till life itself is over,---that the green leaves dried not, till the trunk itself decayed. Ida! not yet?—the voice of love shall break thy slumber.---

SONG.

Wake, my love, the young day wakes,
And from yonder beams of light
The star of morning freshly breaks,
In a beam of purple light.

Wake, my love! oh, wake to bliss,
Th' unconscious rose by love is won,
And hopes its blushing leaves to kiss,
A bridegroom in the rising sun.

Not yet? can joy slumber?—But I will not break in upon thy retirement—thy delicate spirit, which blushes at the

light breathing of the wind, would hate the daring fondness of a lover—I will wait her coming. *(retires.)*

Enter male and female Peasants, crossing the bridge; others enter, ranging on each side of the stage, during the following Chorus.

CHORUS OF PEASANTS.

O'er the meadow, o'er the mountain,
By the greenwood, by the fountain,
Where the bee in daylight glows,
Tippling nectar from the rose,
Lightly as the moments fly,
Trip it, trip it, merrily.

Where a thousand, thousand flowers
Fling around their od'rous showers,
Where the purple violets blow,
Where the golden cowslips grow,
Lightly, &c. &c.

Enter Ida *with a Basket, from the Cottage.*

Ida. I thank you, my kind friends, for this expression of your loves—indeed I do—Ida, never, never will forget she was once the sister of your life and affections. But I must decline your offerings now. I have made a promise to my darling little Eugene, which this morning should absolve—

Count *comes forward.*

Count. You tremble—you weep.

Ida. Oh, my lord, these are not tears of sorrow—My bosom beats, and my cheek glows—with fear—with love.

Count. My dear, dear Ida—

Enter Claude, *having crossed the Bridge.*

Claude. Your presence, my lord, is wanted at the castle.

Count. I come—Now, my love—

Ida. No, I must leave you—but for half an hour—'tis for Eugene.

Count. Still Eugene—trust me, I could be almost jealous of your affection for the little prattler.

Enter Schultz.

Ida. Not so, not so—it is because he is yours, because he is so like to you, that I love him with such tenderness of affection.

Count. Farewell till an hour has wasted,---and then this hand gives me thy heart for ever—farewell.

Ida. Farewell.

[*Music.*—Ida *exits, and the* Count *crosses over the Bridge, followed by* Claude.

Enter Schultz, *from over the Bridge.*

Schul. Oh, this May has a warm hand—she makes the blood hot—makes it tingle—crimsons the cheek of the maid as redly as the rose—But all this is not for me—Is this the cot now?

Enter Schwitzer, *from the Cottage.*

Schul. 'Tis he!—Good morrow!

Schwi. Schultz!—By what wonder—for what purpose—do I see you here?—Is it to seek me?—Can I do aught to your service?—I'm sorry—that is, I'm glad—very glad to see you here.

Schul. Perhaps you would be more so to see me hung—or shot—or any thing, so you were rid of me.

Schwi. You wrong my friendship—my gratitude.

Schul. Do I? I doubt that much. But 'tis little matter—I've an errand to you—shall I deliver it to your private ear, or before these magpies?—They'll not chatter, I dare say.

Schwi. Hush! *(to the Peasants)* What makes you here? Begone—If you would show your antics, go show them at the castle, where they'll be welcome. *(Music*—Carlin *and Peasants go out.)* Now, my friend!

Schul. Friend! ha! ha!—Though in some sort I am your friend, I shall tell you the truth. In Germany I was the partner—I should say, the drudge—of your gambling exploits—and certain other little contrivances to unload my neighbour's pockets!

Schwi. The repetition is superfluous.

Schul. Give me leave—I must tell my tale my own way.

Schwi. Well—very well.

Schul. Yes—thus far was very well—but having cheated every body else, at last you cheated me of my fair division—now, that was very bad.

Schwi. Villain!

Schul. For twelve months I've been in your pursuit—we have met—you must refund.

Schwi. I will—to-morrow.

Schul. Humph!

Schwi. Ida, my supposed daughter, marries to-day the Count Valmore.

Schul. I see no profit in that to me.

Schwi. You will—She is the child of the Marquis Leone.

Schul. He's not married!

Schwi. Still she is his child!

Schul. Suppose it so—What then?

Schwi. He promised me, on her marriage with a man of certain fortune, three thousand ducats. The estate of Valmore doubles the sum of our contract.

Schul. Say you so?—Old acquaintance, you can't deceive me.

Schwi. What mean you?

Schul. This I mean—The Count's estate is derived from his late wife, and descends to his son. Where are then your ducats?

Schwi. The death of the child will remedy that.

Schul. He may not choose to die.

Schwi. Of that I would speak—Will you walk with me?

Schul. Yes, indeed will I—we know each other.

Schwi. (Half aside.) Villain!

Schul. Nay—speak it out, man—I know you wish me at the devil—all in good time for that.

Schwi. Come! [*Music.—Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The interior of a Summer-House. In the flat are two windows looking out into the Country. On one side is a door leading into an inner room.

Enter Ida *with a Basket.*

Ida. Eugene! Eugene!—Not here!—he plays the idler this morning. Gracious Heavens!—What strange feeling is this comes over me! The air seemed to sigh as it passed by me—and its breath so cold!—This is my weakness! the sickness of my fancy!—I will not think of it. *(Looking out of the window.)* The May smells so sweet, and looks so lovely!—Ha! Eugene comes!—I'll hide behind the curtain, and punish the little idler for his absence.

[*Music.—She lets down the curtain of the window, and hides herself behind it, having dropt her scarf.*

Enter Eugene.

Eug. Well now—I thought I saw Ida—I'm sure I did—and here's her scarf. Ah! cunning! cunning!—she has hid herself to surprize me—in the inner room—but I'll surprize her. Softly! softly!

[*Music.*—Eugene *walks on tiptoe into the inner room.*

Enter Schwitzer, *and bolts the door after him.*

Schwi. It must be done!—the boy's death, and only that, can save me from utter ruin!—My name blighted!—My body cast into a dungeon—torn to pieces on the wheel!—I must be bold—be resolute---aye, and quick too in my daring! The villain has me in his gripe, and knows it. I must, I must---'Tis a deed that damns me---yet I must.

[*Music.---He enters the inner room.*

Ida *comes forward.*

Ida. What can bring my father here? his voice was harsh, and his brow gloomy! Hark! I hear a groan---another!---It is the knell of death---of Eugene's death---Merciful powers!

[*Music.---She listens in speechless terror. A stifled cry is heard. She hurries behind the curtain.* Schwitzer *enters with a bloody dagger in his hand.*

Schwi. 'Tis done! would it were yet to do! that I could call back one moment---one little moment---Oh, that cry! that fearful cry! Let me from this cursed spot---ha! what should thy mangled form do here---here too! and here---which soever way I turn, thou art. Must the living

be linked with the dead? The room burns! it flames! above! beneath---around me---oh!

[*Music.---He falls on the floor with a heavy groan, flinging down the dagger, so that it lies half beneath the curtain. A light tapping is heard at the door; after a short pause it is repeated, but more loudly.*

Count. (Without.) Eugene! Eugene! I say!

Schwi. (Starts up.) Thy call cannot break his slumbers. Oh, that it could! that those lips would smile as once they smiled! that the light of life could be rekindled in those eyes!

Count. (Without.) Eugene! It is your father calls you.

Schwi. They'll find me here! not that—not that—though guilty, not the shame of guilt---Instant flight through the window, across the lawn, and then join them as if innocent!---Innocent, the word burns upon my lips!

[*Music.---He makes his escape through the window.*

Ida *rushes forward.*

Ida. The child, the child---he may still live.

[*Music.---Hurries out of the room and raises the child.*

Loud knocking.

They come---Can I convict my father? Never. [*Music.*

Count. (Without.) Force the door---the child must be ill! [*The door is burst open.*

Enter Valmore, Larive, *and Peasants.*

Count. He must be here! how else could the door be fastened within? What frightful dream is this?

[*During this a Peasant opens the door of the inner*

room; Eugene lies dead upon the ground, his body and face partially covered with the scarf.

My child murdered! Horror on horror!

Larive. Who can have done this?---The deed is barbarous beyond belief!

Count. My child! my child!

Larive. Be firm, dear Valmore!—I blame not your grief, but its excess!

Count. My darling! my delight! my hope! the memory of his departed mother!

Larive. (to a Peasant.) Close the door; the sight but feeds his passion!

[*A Peasant takes up the scarf and shuts the door*—Valmore *gazes on the scarf.*

What now?

[Valmore *laughs wildly, and points to the scarf.*

Count. Ida's.—

Larive. How came it here?—Is she too a victim? or is she——

Count. No—no—no—she could not do the deed!

Larive. What's here!—a dagger?—a hand beside it, red as the steel. Undraw the curtain.

[*Music.—They undraw the curtain.*—Ida *is discovered on the ground in a swoon.*

Count. (in a scream of agony.)—Ida!

Ida. Who called?

Larive. How wild she looks!—Strong guilt confounds her!

Count. Ida—you did not—you could not do this.

Ida. Not for worlds!

Count. You hear!—you hear!—It was not she!

Larive. Your belief is too easy! If not yours, whose is this scarlet sin? You must know, for you were here.

Ida. I was.

Count. Tell us, then—tell us, dear Ida, the assassin, that vengeance, vengeance dreadful as his act, may pursue and blast him!

Ida. (wringing her hands.) I may not—Oh!—I may not tell.

Larive. This is the last subterfuge of guilt; she affects the mystery of a secret, which does not exist.

Count. Ida, who did this deed?—It is the father asks: the lover that implores.—*(she is silent—he kneels)*—Ida, on my knees, I conjure you—By these tears that scald me as they fall:—Will they not move you?—*(She is still silent, and becomes more and more agitated.)*—Then by him who hovers in the spirit over us—by your hopes of worldly happiness, as you would shun shame, and misery, and death—reveal this mystery!

[Ida, *in violent agitation, drops the dagger.*

Guilty!—alas! most guilty!

Enter Schwitzer.

Schw. I heard the voice of lamentation, and——

Larive. Eugene is murdered!

Schw. Murdered!—when?—where?—By whom?

[Larive *points to* Ida.

Ida!—Ida!—the murderess of Eugene!—an improbable slander!—Impossible!

Larive. We found the dagger in her grasp—here.

Schw. Concealed!

Ida. (Pointedly to Schwitzer.*)* Yes! I saw the murderer!—saw him enter—heard the groan of his victim.

Larive. You seem confounded—*(to* Schw.*)*

Schw. She is my child!—and—and guilty—should it not confound me?

Ida. Guilty! You (*to* Schw.) can speak for me—you can save me.—You, only you.

Schw. I pity you. Expect no more.

Ida. (wildly.) Must I then die?—die the death of shame? Forgive me, heaven! The murderer is——

Schw. (Pointedly.) Whom, whom would you accuse? Your *father* asks the question?

Ida. My father!—true! true!—I accuse no one!—ask favour for no one!—Give me but your blessing.

[*Music.*—Schwitzer *raises his hand, but draws it back suddenly, and with strong emotion.*

Larive. Do you refuse her even that?

Schw. (Thrown off his guard by his agitation.) I cannot bless her—there's blood upon—

Larive. Ha!

Schw. (recollecting himself.) Upon the head of guilt. A father's blessing would fall on her, as rain upon the rock. I cannot—no—I cannot bless her. [*He rushes out.—Music.*

Ida. Lost!—abandoned by all—Oh, Valmore!

Count. (starting up.) It is the same voice that was once so sweet, so innocent! Ida!—Ida!—Of what an earthly heaven have you robbed me!—This day, so long, so ardently expected, and now it comes crimsoned with blood. Oh, Ida!—I loved thee with a passion passing words; and still—oh, still, thou art lovely, too!—too lovely. [*He clasps her wildly to his breast.*

Larive. Valmore!

Count. What is't I do!—Murderess—angel!—away!—away! Her sight will madden me! and yet I love—love in my despair!

Larive. Bear her to prison!

Ida. Valmore, Valmore, you shall know all—the guilt is not on me.

Count. Speak, speak, and save me from despair—speak, dearest Ida.

Ida. A moment—but a moment's pause.

Larive. Nay, this——

Count. Hush! hush! the word of confession trembles on her lips——Ida!

Ida. The assassin is——I cannot—No, I cannot——but yet most innocent.

Larive. Hence—away with her.

[*Music.*—Larive *forces off* Valmore—*The Peasants lead out* Ida.

SCENE III.

An open space before an old ruined Barn.

Crank Cuffin, *the* Patrico, *the* Jackman, *with a Crew of Beggars, singing, dancing, and carousing.*

CHORUS OF BEGGARS.

Let it flow, let it flow,
Till our own blood shall glow
As the drops that the goblet rains:
Wine's the blood of the earth,
We her children by birth,
Drink our life from her purple veins.

Enter Jean Jaques, *with a bludgeon.*

Jean J. Up, my marrows, up; there's work in hand. Are you all here?

Patr. All.

Jean J. Let the new-comer stand before us.

C. Cuffin. That's I, massa!—I new-comer.

Jean J. Stand by our side; and as you are raw, we shall be per—per—perspiring in our speech; but first tip me a gage of fogus.

The Patrico *brings him a pipe of tobacco.*

Canters and Millers—*(puff)*—Partners of my toils, my whippings, and my fame—*(puff)*—never were the words of Jean Jaques needed less—therefore it is I speak—*(puff)*—'tis the way with orators.

Cuff. Cot tam; massa, me no understand.

Jean J. Silence!—all this is nothing to the purpose—therefore I mention it; for this nothing is the fur, the flounce, the furbelow of oratory—*(puff)*—the garnish of the beef—not the beef itself.

Cuff. Aha! massa! me understand the beef.

Jean J. Silence, fellow! This day, Ida of the cottage marries Count Valmore—a fine bustling time—we may maunder much, and convey more.

Cuff. Cot's plessing! this looks like thieving!

Jean J. Thieving! pooh!—we wise men call it borrowing.

Cuff. Iss, massa; but me damnably afraid you no remember to return what you borrow.

Jean J. Reason, you black angel. Is not Sir Promise a man of fashion and general acceptance? And has he not a memory, short as the fifth of December? Go to; you are raw.—You three will look after stray trifles—I hate any thing should be lost. Spoons will wander in such a busy time, and fingers were not given to you for nothing. You two will have your eyes more especially on the kitchen: if any turkey, loaf, or grunter play the truant, pound him for our royal use;—we are lord of the manor, and all waifs belong of right to us. But away to your posts—off with you.

[*Exeunt all but* Jean Jacques.

I must hold my state with the villains—must keep up my royalty. By my cudgel, the sceptre of my power, I swear I would not change my jacket for the robes of an emperor

SONG.

Beggars lead merry lives,
Neither tax, work, nor wives,
Laugh, quaff, prancing and kissing, oh!
Their life's a holiday,
From morn 'till night they play,
Rag tag, begging for me;
Worshipful noble, sir,
Give me a penny for
The love of Heaven, or
What's to become of me?
Then if he will not give,
Neat in his pocket dive,
There's no sin
Fishing in
A neighbour's trout stream, oh!

Quick hands and nimble feet,
Never need want for meat,
Laugh, quaff, grub is in plenty, oh!
Then if we want to peck,
Fig for the Harman Beck,
Laugh, quaff, legerdemain.
Cacklers that on heaths stray,
Grunters that meet our way,
By a slight we convey;
Conjuring's no theft, I wis,
Hedges that linen bear,
East and West Indies are,
And our trade's
Not afraid
Of wind and water, oh!
Beggars lead, &c.

[Jean Jacques *beckons on* Patrico, *who brings him the dress of an old woman, which he puts on.*---Jean Jacques *speaks while dressing himself.*

Where are the kids ?

Patr. They're all out: Dubois has three, Margery four.

Jean J. Four devils! What do you think I'm to do? An old woman without children!—Zounds! you might as well talk of a fox without a tail, or a lawyer without a wig—a trooper without whiskers, or a barber without his bason.——Mizzle! Here's a gentry cove.

[*The* Patrico *goes out*—Jean Jacques *retires.*

Enter the Marquis Leone.

Marq. This spot then is the end of my travel—this hour of my expectation. The day too smiles on my purpose; 'tis calm as an infant's sleep! Oh! this moment has the distilled bliss of years—the transport of a life!

Enter Jean Jacques, *and comes forward.*

Jean J. Have pity on a poor old Irish woman.

Marq. I've nothing for you.

Jean J. Thank your honour all the same. May your honour never know what it is to be a widow with four sick children, and your belly as empty as a kettle-drum.

Marq. Your tale looks like untruth.

Jean J. I'll swear to it point blank as any cannon shot—five sick children.

Marq. But now you said four.

Jean J. That is, your honour, without counting the little fellow in the cellar, who is as hungry as his brothers, Lord bless him! Arrah, now, and where shall we get a morsel to ate? Sure it isn't I can tell you that.

Marq. I do but half believe your tale.

Jean J. Then pray, your honour, give something to the half you do believe, and let the other starve for a big liar as it is:—you need not ate the rotten half of the apple.

Marq. Take this, and go—*(giving money)*—Your presence offends.

Jean J. Your honour is plased to say so—but I could stay all day and look on your generous face. Sure now, 'tis as fine a one as ever sate on shoulders!

Marq. Begone!

Jean J. A thousand thanks to your honour;—you have given me here a tirteen.—I'm thinking now, he would be lonesome, poor fellow, in my pocket—for devil a plack will be there to keep him company.

Marq. Another then—but leave me without a word.

Jean J. I'm dumb as a fish, heaven bless your honour—mute as a Pythagorean.

[*Exit* Jean Jacques.

Enter Schwitzer.

Marq. My friend!

Schw. The Marquis Leone!—I did not expect your presence.

Marq. I come to own and claim my daughter.

Schw. A natural child!—who cannot be acknowledged but with her own disgrace, and the deeper shame of her mother.

Marq. 'Tis time to undeceive you.—Eighteen years ago, a private marriage gave me the hand of Milan's daughter. Ida, the fruit of that union, was confided to you, that nothing might betray our dangerous secret—for dangerous it was—dangerous as death to both.—The Duke is dead!—His son reigns, and allows our union.

Schw. Had you come one day earlier—one hour—Oh!—what guilt!—what misery had been spared!

Marq. Guilt!—Has she, the daughter of my blood, stoop'd to dishonour?

Schw. To worse!—to sin!—She is a murderess!

Marq. A murderess!

Schw. Alas! that it is so!

Marq. Schwitzer!—my friend!—my loved!—my trusted friend! Is this a proved—mark me—a proved truth, or but a suspicion, built on popular belief.—It is her father asks.

Schw. Horror! *(Groans heavily, and hides his face.)*

Marq. Enough! your anguish tells me it is true—I will see her.

Schw. You must not—Forgive me—my zeal for your honour speaks! Being owned your child, her shame fastens on your house!—It will be said Leone's daughter was a murderess!

Marq. Never!—I'll not unfold myself unless—she must be innocent—the name of her accuser?

Schw. Count Valmore!—and in his castle she remains till to-morrow; when she will be sent to Paris, for her trial—but let me---

Marq. His abode?

Schw. Yon castle on the mountain—but sure some time for thought---

Marq. I have thought—the past—the present—the future, all have flitted with the speed of light across my brain. I'll see this Valmore first—we meet anon. [*Exit* Marquis.

Schw. His weakness will betray she is his child!—then what becomes of me?—the thought that I am her father alone compels her silence! Her death!—a crimson sea rolls round me at the word!—I'll sin no deeper!---yet something must be done!---I've heard of herbs whose potency can image death—close up the eyes, and still the rideless blood, while life is throbbing at the heart! Despair makes the worst in season. [*Exit* Schwitzer.

SCENE IV.

A Vault.—Ida *asleep on a rude couch---The* Count *by her side*---Claude *waiting---Lamp burning.*

SONG.---Count Valmore.

On the pale day the shadows are creeping,
Silent and sad the twilight is weeping,
Slumber, my love, 'till the morning is nigh;
In the moon's light the flowrets are sleeping,
Slumber, my love, 'till the morning is nigh.

Shadows that form from sick fancy borrow,
Cloud not thy sleep with visions of sorrow,
Slumber, my love, 'till the morning is nigh;
Blest be thy night, more blessed thy morrow,
Sleep 'till the stars in the warm day-light die.

Count. Still sleeping---at such a time—with sin, and shame, and death around her! Can this sleep be the sleep of guilt?---so calm!---so heavenly calm!---the blue depth of air is not more still!---the rose more lovely when it slumbers in the moon-light.---Her breathing so light, it would scarcely move the gossamer. The pearly drops yet hang upon her eye-lids---one kiss---one parting kiss--- *(he kneels and kisses her.)* Thou shalt not die! Tho' guilty and lost to me, thou shalt not die! Claude!

Claude. My lord!

Count. You love poor Ida!---therefore, hear me. I may not openly allow her flight; for slander, that from good sucks evil, would tax me with participation of the crime I spared. It would be said I wished Eugene---(*overpowered*) my poor boy---Follow me, Claude, all must be prepared ere midnight.

Ida. (in her sleep.) Valmore!

Count. She calls!

Claude. 'Tis in her sleep, my lord!

Count. I never again shall hear that voice!---Oh, Ida!---thou hast broken this heart, but I forgive you---The father of Eugene forgives you.

[*Music.---He hurries out, followed by* Claude.

Ida. (rises.) Valmore! Methought I saw and heard him! 'Twas a dream!---yet one so sweet, so bright---bright as the golden clouds, and no less quick to fade. Oh!---that this slumber could have been for the ever of this world!---till earth itself woke to a new life.

Claude *enters with a basket.*

To what new suffering am I called?

Claude. To none by my will, dearest lady. Look!---a friend sends this;---Take it;---take it;---you know not half the good is in it. Don't be obstinate, now, to your own good: I wink; I say nothing; there may be a letter in it.

Ida. A letter!

Claude. There may be, but I'm not bound to know the basket is other than an honest basket. Mum!---Good bye---I must haste to my appointment. I wish you well *out* of your difficulties---Good bye, lady. [*Exit* Claude.

Ida. This dreadful day! what I was! and what I am! oh, I am all forgetfulness! *(She unfolds the Letter, and reads.)*---"Flight alone can save you, and the means are "ready. Your prison makes one of many vaults con-"nected, some openly, and more privately with each other. "After ten, escape will be impossible." After ten---is then the night over? this long, this dreary night---it should be morning. Is the hour past, or is it yet to come?---I have

heard no hours---have heard no bell speak to the silence of the night---oh, the ear of grief is deaf to the heavy tread of time. But I will hope---I will not despair. Gracious heavens!---It must be near upon the hour; the moon is almost over us!---" The spring is concealed"---the lamp burns so dimly---" is concealed behind." *(The light goes out.)* Lost! lost! So near the haven, and yet lost---Ha! will not the moon throw day enough upon this darkness! *(Music.---She goes to the window and endeavours to trace the Letter.)* Not a word! the feeble light mocks me with dim and senseless characters. *(The Castle clock strikes ten.)* The clock strikes ten---and I must die---die the death of shame!---Burst but for an instant from the envious clouds---Look on me, but for a moment---a darker rack sweeps over it. Hark! *(a heavy dull knocking is heard at the wall)* Some one knocks! *(knock)* Again! the sound is from yonder!---A light too shines through the crevices of the mouldering wall! there, then, must be the spring! *(Music.---She feels the wall.)* This pannel seems loose---it yields---it yields.

[*Music.---She presses strongly against the wall, and a door flies open;* Schultz *is discovered, a lamp in his hand, and muffled up in a large cloak.*

Wretched father---is it you?---follow thee---no---the tie that linked our hearts is snapt---but yet I will spare thee a second crime---my blood shall not be upon thy head. (Schultz *by signs commands her to follow and be silent.)* I understand---I follow you! [*Music.---They go out.*

SCENE V.

Another Vault, with several branching passages, the wall at the back is ruined, and shows a Gallery: on one side a large grated window, through which the sea is visible in the moon-light.

Enter Schwitzer *and* Claude, *carrying a light.*

Schw. Still he comes not? Art sure your memory of these passages has not deceived you?

Claude. Certain! From a boy I've been in the service of this family, and my father's father the same before me.

Schw. Surely that blood-hound, Schultz, has not found resistance and destroyed her? *(A loud whistle, and a large square rigged boat appears below the window.)* The boat, and they not come!---*(He unbolts a door that opens on the water.)* We shall be with you soon, but draw off, round the tower: you may be seen there from the castle windows.

Claude. Suppose we search;---he may have lost the way!

Schw. How shall we meet, once parted? I'm ignorant in this labyrinth.

Claude. Leave the light here; its rays will glimmer far, and be a guide to your return.

Schw. Be it so:---you that way; I'll to the left.

[*Music.*---Schwitzer *and* Claude *go out*---Schultz *enters with* Ida *in the Gallery.*

Schul. Not here? Where, in the devil's name, have they got to now?

Ida. That's not the voice of my father!

Schul. Silence---you had best. The boat not come either?

Ida. I fear him---there's murder in his eye!

Schul. Why do you stare so? She's half crazy; and Schwitzer's little better.

Ida. What is your intent? I'll go no further---I'll return.

Schul. Stay, and be quiet, or you will ruin all. (*He looks out for the boat.*) Not yet; I would she were at the bottom, and all that are in her.

Ida. Let me fly from this dreadful being!---Worse---worse than death awaits me here!

[*Music.---She attempts to fly;* Schultz *seizes her.*

Schul. Try that trick again, my girl, and I'll clip your wings for flying.

Ida. Help! save me! save me!

Schul. Another syllable, and its your last.

Ida. (starting from him.) Help! help!

Schul. The dagger! *(feeling in his belt)* Gone! death and hell! Ha! yonder by the lamp!

[*Music.---He drags her towards the place where the poniard lies; just as he raises it to stab her,* Schwitzer *appears in the ruined gallery.*

Schw. Villain!

[*Music.---He fires a pistol at* Schultz, *who drops.---Exit* Schultz.

Schwitzer *leaps down*---Ida *hides her face in her robe.*

Schw. Fear nothing---You're safe! *(he whistles)* No answer!---And lights coming this way!---*(he whistles again---*

it is returned)---They come!---Quick, quick!---A moment, and you are too late---Pull for your lives!

Music.---Enter the Marquis.

Marq. Hold!

Schw. Madman---I will save her;---mark me, will.

Marq. This must not be: flight is the testimony of guilt.

Schw. I am resolved! and you---aye, you---will hereafter find my resolution was your friend.

Marq. Stay them!

Schw. The storm is up!---Advance!

Music.---A party of Sailors enter from the boat.

The power is mine, and I will use it to your profit, though not your wishes. Ere you can reach the castle through these vaults, we shall be at sea, beyond your grasp!

Marq. Schwitzer!---

Schw. (aside to the Marquis.) What would your after feeling be, if your nice honour betrayed her to a shameful death?

Marq. Right! right!---You are my friend---Yet one moment---Ida---

Schw. Beware!

Marq. I loved thy mother---and thou---art very, very like to her;---for her it is I shed these tears; for her I fold thee to my bosom! for her I kiss thee! Oh, my child! my child!——Yet no---the blood of a fellow-creature cries out to Heaven against thee.---Away from me---Leone cannot acknowledge thee---Yet save her, Schwitzer---save her from ignominy and death.

Ida. No---no---no---Are you---are you indeed my father?---Life is on the word!

Schw. (furiously) Bear her to the boat!

Marq. Farewell---farewell for ever!---It was thy father kissed thee!---

Ida. Hear my——Stay---I am not guilty.

[*Music.---The* Marquis *rushes out,* Schwitzer *and the Sailors bear* Ida *to the boat.*

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE. I.---*Violent Storm---On either side lofty white Cliffs---A small half-decked Boat driving on the water.*

Claude, Valmore, *and Servants on the Beach.*

Count. The night is dreadful. Round to the cliff with your torches. Yon boat is driving on the coral reef---and fire the beacon, Claude.

[*Servants and* Claude *go out, and appear presently on the Cliff.*

If my poor Ida should be on board that vessel! The lightning flashed around a female form! It strikes! they're lost.

[*Music.---The vessel strikes upon a rock in a violent burst of the storm.*

All must perish.---That form again!---(*Vivid flashes of lightning.*)---'Tis she! 'tis Ida!

[*Music---He rushes out---The beacon flames*---Ida *stands on the highest part of the deck, visible on the glare of lightning*—Schwitzer *appears struggling in the water---He at last reaches a low piece of rock in front and staggers forward.*

Schw. Again upon this cursed land, where every rock and every tree are witness of my crime. I fly, and the ocean denies to bear me.---I fly, and the wild winds beat me back.---I walk but in a circle!---(*Violent storm.*)---Poor girl!---I would have saved thee, yet better thus you die, and with you dies my secret.

[*Storm increases---The ship parts*---Ida *shrieks as she is borne into the water.*

Count. (*on the rock.*) 'Tis Ida! (*Leaps from the rock into the sea.*)

Schw. Lost! Lost even there, where my hope was. Earth and heaven are against me! But I can end this torture---end it as far as belongs to this world. I can defy the wrath that threatens me. (*Thunder and lightning---he draws his dagger---after a struggle with himself, he drops it.*) Guilt is feeble! I dare not---cannot. There is a voice in the wind, and in the thunder, that forbids it. Miserable wretch! There is no escape for thee---none.

[*Music*---Valmore *reaches the low rock with* Ida, *and comes forward.*

Count. Take---take her---my strength fails---I can no more.

[*Music---He puts* Ida, *who is lifeless, into* Schwitzer's *arms, and drops.*

Schw. Her senses sleep! she will not feel the iron grasp of death!---Sleep the quiet slumber of the grave!

[*She opens her eyes---gazes at him unconsciously, and then closes them again with a deep sigh.*

Ida. Eugene---wake---wake---he'll murder thee. (*She sinks senseless in his arms.*)

Schw. Oh! the tide of the past rushed in upon me, with that look---those eyes were once turned in infant love upon me! I cannot---no---I cannot harm thee.

Claude. (*without.*) Bring your torches to the beach!

Schw. They come! What were it best to do? Fly! till time ministers occasion for escape into some other land.

[*Music---He bears her out.*

Claude *and Servants enter.*

Claude. One of the shipwreck'd seamen---No, our master, cold and senseless. (Valmore *groans heavily.*) He

lives! he lives!---'Tis but faintness from exertion! Bear him to the castle for further aid. (*They raise up* Valmore.)

Count. Schwitzer!

Claude. 'Tis your servant, Claude.

Count. Where is Ida? Where is she? Does she live?

Claude. My lord!

Count. If she be dead, speak. I bore her through the waters---The worst at once---Do not distil misery drop by drop upon my head.

Claude. We've seen neither the lady nor her father.

Count. I brought her to the shore---I gave her to his arms.

Claude. No doubt, then, he has taken her to the castle for further aid.

Count. Right, Claude; it must be so.---Your arm---my head is yet dizzy, and my limbs faint under me.

[*Music---They lead out* Valmore.

SCENE II.

Interior of a poor Cottage.

Enter Lisette *and* Henri.

SONG.---Henri.

The world is gay, and the moon is bright,
But oh! there are sweeter hours in night,
Believe me, love, believe me;
When the light falls down in pearly show'rs,
And trembles o'er rills and the sleeping bow'rs,
And softly, so softly steal the hours,
That night would soon deceive thee.

Sweet then on the moonlit bank to lie,
For love then burns in the heart and eye,

And day's cold thoughts would leave thee;
Sweet then to murmur the words of bliss,
While lip meets lip in a burning kiss;
Earth may have joys, but heaven's in this;
Believe me, love, believe me.

Lisette. I dare say. All this may be true---but---

Henri. But what?

Lisette. But morning succeeds to night, and the flower that only bloomed in its darkness, is clouded, and droops before the sun.---And hark!

TRIO.---Henri, Lisette, *and* Patrico.

Patrico. (Without.) **Lisette!**
Lisette and Henri. **Who calls? the word, or else the sign.**
Patrico. (Without.) **A friend of night, a friend of night,**
Let the fire blaze, and flow the purple wine——
Lisette and Henri. **The wine does flow, the fire is bright;**
Enter by the embers' light.
[*Unbars the door.*

Enter Beggars, with spars and various pieces of the wreck.

CHORUS.

The night is old,
The wind is cold,
The rain like a mill-stream is pouring,
The lightnings fly
O'er a nighted sky,
And the thunder like ocean is roaring.
[*Exeunt Females.*

Cuff. Cot tam him, massa, to send us out in such a hurly-burly night. We get no ting from the wreck worth conveying away!

Patrico. Yes, we have. The Jackman has picked up a barrel of brandy, and some balsam.

Cuff. Balsam! What we do with that? turn doctors?

Patrico. Money, I mean money.

Cuff. Oh, money! Black man like a drop of that balsam. The doctors---Tevil tam them! keep no such physic.

Enter Jean Jaques.

Jean J. Take my buff—my jerkin—Lizzy! Here's a wicked night for pains-taking folks like us, who would be doing---Not a pocket walks abroad for an industrious hand to reap any thing! I'll have a new almanack made.—Bar the door, Lizzy.---A cup of the doctor, Blackskin!

Cuff. (Giving him a horn of spirits.) Here, massa!

Jean J. An' it pours at this rate much longer, the world will be fit for nothing but the little fishes---'twill be one large fish-pond! Fill again, black angel! The very trees have got the ague with it, and keep shivering and shaking, and nodding their heads at each other, like so many old women with the palsy.

Cuff. (Drinking the rum.) Tam cood---him warm stomach.

Jean J. Hollo! drink our doctor.

Cuff. Poor black man tam cold, and want doctor himself.

Jean J. Take that ill-omened black visage from our presence, it always puts us in mind of the old gentleman in sables.---I don't see the claws or the tail, but those monstrous boots would hide the griffin-hoof, corns and all; and as for the tail—you wear huge slops—perhaps you carry that curled up in your breeches pocket. *(A knock without; the Beggars appear alarmed.)* Hush! not a word! (*The knocking is repeated.*)

Cuff. I dare say this some poor fellow lose his way in wood.

Jean J. Croak not, black angel.

Ida. (*Without.*) For heaven's sake, open the door, or I am lost.

Cuff. 'Tis one woman's voice.

Jean J. What's that to you? Stubble it—that is, hold your tongue. [*Exit* Cuffin.

Ida. (*Without.*) Have pity on me—My strength fails! the night is dark and stormy—I can go no further.

Jean J. 'Tis the voice of the lady Ida—a chair!—Quick, varlets, quick. (*They unbar the door.*) She saved me this morning from a scowering—and a monarch should be grateful. She shall be welcome to our kingdom.

[*Music.—The door is opened.*

Enter Ida.

Ida. If you are men, protect me from him!

Jean J. Here you are safe—Who is your enemy?

Ida. If I can but escape him till the morning—hark! I hear the rustling of approach amongst the boughs.

Lisette. 'Tis the heavy plash of rain upon the leaves.

Ida. Hark!—Again—I hear footsteps! (*Thunder.*)

Jean J. That must be fancy—the wind and the thunder make such a devil of a concert, one could not hear a troop of elephants, though they were dancing a fandango.

Ida. Perhaps it was my fancy. There's such a chaos here—(*putting her hand painfully to her head.*) Such a wild tumult—Shadows of the day flit over me like the broken images of sleep!

Jean J. Poor soul—seems in sad trouble.

[Ida *gazes round wildly*—Schwitzer *looks in at the window, she perceives him.*

Ida. 'Tis he! 'tis he!---the murderer---Bar the door---he comes to seize---to murder me!

[*Music.*---Ida *seems violently agitated.*

Enter Schwitzer.

Schw. Ha! you're there, Ida?

Ida. Save me from him! he would destroy me!

Jean J. It is your father, lady.

Ida. 'Tis false! I'm a stranger to his blood---Leave me not to his power---a woman---helpless, hopeless kneels to you for aid---prays for it with tears of agony---with heart that throbs to bursting!

Schw. Poor thing! the terrors of the last few hours have turned her brain!

Ida. Believe him not!—I am not mad—He would murder me, as he murdered poor Eugene!

Schw. Does not this convince you?—Does not her outward shew denote her mind's distraction?

Ida. Oh, that villany should look so like to innocence!

Schw. Time flies, my friends.—I would save her from the retribution of her crime—Let this purse bribe your silence.

Jean J. Truly, I know not what to think. I would fain serve the lady Ida, if I were certain how that service could be rendered.

Ida. Will nothing undeceive them?—I saved your life, will you betray me to death?

Schw. Let her garments be changed; they're heavy with the waters—Go, Ida—nay, you must.—Fond girl, you're in my toils, your struggles will only make the chains sit more gallingly upon you.

Ida *is led out by* Lisette.

Schw. Let this purse reward your silence.

Jean J. I'll take your purse—that is—in a fair way!—for I don't see why honesty shouldn't be paid, as well as other folks!—You'll stay with us till morning—

Schw. She might be found here: her escape is known, and justice is no doubt busy in her search.

Jean J. Bah!—we've a snug hiding place a few yards from here---in the rock---above the river: Justice is a troublesome old girl, and will sometimes want to force her acquaintance on people, but we always cut her.

Schw. Refusal may create suspicion (*aside*)—I accept your offer. Ha! the Marquis——how to escape this new peril?

Music.---The Marquis *enters at the door.*

Jean J. What makes he in our territories?

Marq. Good people, forgive my uninvited visit.

Schw. (*aside*) All's lost!

Marq. I was travelling from your country, but my guide lost his way in the mazes of this forest, and we've wandered here since sun-set.

[*Music.*---Jean Jaques *is busy about the* Marquis: Schwitzer *endeavours to attract the notice of* Jean Jaques; Ida, *unseen by him, beckons another.*

Schw. If I could but draw his notice to me---(*turning round*)---She will return, and one word from her lips pronounces my condemnation---She knows him for her father---There is no longer any tie that links her heart to me---I must be quick---Is the fool blind?

[*Music.---He again tries to gain the attention of* Jean Jaques, *and, failing, stamps wrathfully on the floor.*

Jean J. (*turning round at the violence of his action*) What now?.

Schw. (*beckons him*) Yon man is one of our pursuers---the worst---the bitterest of our enemies. Secure him!---while we pass to your place of safety, or she will return, and her madness will betray us.

Jean J. I will.

Marq. Ha! Schwitzer! why are you here? I thought you far from this fatal country, the land where every hope of my life has been wrecked---Where, too, is Ida?

Ida. (without) It is—it is his voice.

Ida *rushes in, and flings herself at the feet of the* Marquis, *&c.*

Ida. Help! or your daughter dies!

Marq. Wretched girl! what do you here? Must all my wanderings be haunted by your guilt?

Schw. Seize her!---Curse on the villains!

Ida. Save me! the guilt is his!

Schw. (Seizing her, and flinging his cloak round her.) The die is cast!

Marq. Stay! There's something more in this---she shall have hearing.

[*Music.---The Beggars surround the* Marquis, *while* Schwitzer *bears off* Ida, *followed by* Jean Jaques.

Unhand me, villains!

[*Music.---After a struggle, the* Marquis *disengages himself, and rushes out.---They hurry out.*

SCENE III.

A Cave, skirted by water; a tree forms a bridge over it.

Enter Jean Jaques *and* Ida, *over the bridge.*

Jean J. Here you are in safety—I will return anon!

Ida. The struggle is in vain! reproach or prayers, alike confirm their error. *(She sits down on a piece of rock.)*

Jean J. One thing I had forgot; if you spy danger near you, cut the tackle which supports the trunk; I mean the bridge, and retire in the inner cave; before they can get at you, I will find means for your release. *(He passes over the bridge.)*

Enter Schwitzer.

Schw. That I could snap the chain of guilt!—but it will not be. Crime follows crime, as day follows day in undisturbed succession.—(*The* Marquis *appears on the bridge.*) Crime is the safety of crime; if they hold the Marquis till morning, as they promised, it may be done. I may steal upon his sleep, and with one blow end my danger.

Marq. I shall not sleep so near you.

Schw. My friend!

Marq. What, would you still deceive me? My Ida! my innocent—my much wrong'd Ida. *(embracing her.)*

Ida. Oh! I am happy now.

Marq. For you, villain; cruel, ungrateful villain!—But I will have vengeance on thee!—do you laugh—do you mock my anger?

Schw. I do—the boar flies while flight is open to him, but when at bay, he turns upon his hunters—death to the weakest—the storm smites one or other!

Ida. Oh, my father.

Schw. Wretched fool! why have you followed your own

ruin? I sought you not—I wished you not—but you come—you know all—I am the murderer of Eugene.

Marq. Villain!

Schw. Right, right, yet 'tis to you a fatal knowledge! 'tis the fruit of death! you tread upon your grave.

[*The* Marquis *and* Schwitzer *fight—The former is beaten down, and loses his sword.*

Schw. Die—and with you die my fears.

Ida. Spare him—Oh, spare him—'tis Ida asks—Ida—whom you once loved so tenderly, so dearly. *(Aside to her father.)* Fly, fly.

Marq. And you?

Ida. 'Tis not my life he aims at.

Schw. Fond girl, you can do much—aye, more than earth beside can do with me—but not this—Life, honour, happiness—I must destroy him.

Ida. You cannot—dare not. (*Leone steals off during this dialogue.*

Schw. Dare not?

Ida. No—dare not. Think you the blood of the poor Eugene has sunk into the earth? No—its cry is heard in heaven, bearing witness against you. Is not his voice in your ear? Is not his figure in your eye: pale, mangled, dying?

Schw. My soul is faint—winter is at my heart—yet what is it I fear?—why do I tremble?—what! he flies? Off, traitress—off.

[*Music*—Schwitzer *flings off* Ida, *and rushes over the bridge in pursuit of the* Marquis.

Ida. Should he die—die for me—wretched, wretched Ida!—no hope shines for thee—none—why—why was I ever born. Hark, a groan—or was it but my fancy—Oh, this suspense is frightful.

[*Music—She ascends the bridge, but seeing* Schwitzer, *returns.*

Ida. Lost! lost! The murderer comes! Ha! the bridge—did he not say it was held by those ropes only—But how to sever them? The sword which dropt from my father's fainting hand. (Schwitzer *appears on the bridge.*) I must be speedy.

[*Music---She cuts the ropes, and the bridge falls with* Schwitzer.

Ida. Am I then at last a murderess. Oh, not on me—not on me be his blood. My soil is innocent of the deed. Ha! he rises—he has reached the rock.

Schw. (*At the bottom of the rock.*) Tremble, traitress, tremble—you shall not escape me, though your father has.

Ida. What hope now is left? My own hands have cut off the path of safety. And must I die—die by the hand of murder? Horrible—They come—My father, thy help! help!

[Valmore, *the* Marquis, *&c. appear on the rock.*

Count. Fell the tree—We may pass across it.

Ida. Speed, or I am lost.

Schw. (*On the top of the rock.*) Forbear your work—it is a fruitless one. I must die—but I shall not fall alone. Ida, the daughter—Ida, the bride, falls with me. (*He draws.*)

Ida. A moment, and you are too late.

[*At this moment the tree falls;* Valmore, Marquis, &c. *group on the stage.*

THE END.

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1819.

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Rodwell, Printer, Theatre Royal, Drury-Lane.

TO

JOSEPH S. MUNDEN, ESQ.

For his kindness in presenting, and recommending it to the Manager of the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane,

THIS FARCE

Is most respectfully

Inscribed by

The AUTHOR.

Thornhaugh Street,
Feb. 16, 1819.

TO THE PUBLICK.

I SHOULD be guilty of ingratitude were I to suffer this TRIFLE to be published unaccompanied by my most sincere thanks, to those Ladies and Gentlemen, who by their excellent performance of the different Characters allotted to them, rendered it worthy your notice and approbation: I drew sketches only, which they ably finished.

I am truely happy that I have been fortunate enough to afford Mr. MUNDEN an opportunity of displaying his inimitable talants, his "*Man Tim*" was rendered a most amusing creature by Mr. KNIGHT's exquisite acting, and the Audience by their repeated plaudits felt the full force of the comick powers of both master and man. To Mr. RUSSELL, (for his spirited performance of *Brisk.*) Mr. T. COOKE, Mrs. ALSOP, Miss CUBITT and Mrs. BLAND, I feel equally obliged.

Notwithstanding that I have published about three hundred different Musical Copositions, I feel greatly alarmed, in ushering this FARCE into the world; being well aware, that it will not afford half that amusement in the closet which it does on the Stage. I hope, however, that those who will take the trouble to read it, will consider it as an humble effort of a CYMMRO to produce an hour's rational Entertainment.

JOHN PARRY.

February 16, 1819.

☞ The MUSICK is published by E. WELLER, 23, Oxford Street.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Sir Frederick Augustus Pageant, Bart..	An illiterate man, just come to the title by the death of his brother	*Mr. Munden*
Mr. Franklin..	A gentleman in love with Miss Pageant	*Mr. T. Cooke*
Brisk, ...	Franklin's servant, a sharp, clever fellow	*Mr. Russell*
Timothy	Sir Frederick's factotum:— valet, cook, butler, &c.....	*Mr. Knight*

Head Waiter, Waiters, Servants, &c.

Charlotte.....	Sir Frederick's niece, an accomplished young lady....	*Miss Cubitt*
Martha, ...	Her waiting-woman, a fantastical girl, fond of dress, &c. &c.....	*Mrs. Alsop*
Mrs. O'Connor,..	the landlady of the inn	*Mrs. Bland*

Scene lies at Exmouth in Devonshire

HIGH NOTIONS;

OR,

A TRIP TO EXMOUTH.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A* Room *at the* Inn,

Waiters bringing Luggage, &c.

Enter Mrs. O'Connor.

Mrs. O'C. Come, bustle, bustle—a famous arrival—I wonder who they can be!

Waiter. (*with a port-folio*) Here's a name, reads, "Sir Frederick Augustus Pageant, Baronet."

Mrs. O'C. A pratty long name for a little man, sure, by their conversation and appearance, I don't think they have been much used to travel.

Waiter. I never saw such a set out in all my life.

Mrs. O'C. Be easy, be easy, here comes one of them.

Enter Timothy, *dress'd in a curious travelling garb, with bundles, sticks, umbrellas, &c. in his hand.*

Tim. (*snuffing as he comes on*) something smells well---roast ducks, or liver and bacon, (*snuffs again*) no, no, 'tis an Irish stew (*smacks his lips.*)

Mrs, O'C. Your most obedient, sir, you are heartily welcome to Exmouth. I hope you had a pleasant journey of it.

Tim. Smother'd with dust, and almost broiled to a cinder.

Mrs. O'C. Will, your honor, take any refreshment?

Tim. Let us have the best apartments in your house, and the best of every thing to eat; and let it be well *cook'd*, for I am a judge.

Mrs. O'C. You shall, my lord judge.

Tim. Ha! ha! I mean, that I am a judge of cookery; my master, Sir Frederick Augustus Pageant, Baronet, is very particular, and *I* am particular too. Sir Frederick, to be sure, is rather an odd sort of man; and *I'm* an odd sort of a man too. He is very fond of ceremony and rich gravies, and so am I: put those bundles on the fire.

Mrs. O'C. and Wai. Sir?

Tim. Pshaw! I mean, in our bed chambers.

Mrs. O'C. Immediately, your honour.

Mrs. O'C. and Wai. (*take the bundles, &c.*)

[*Exit.*

Tim. Never was a man more alter'd in this world than my poor master is. Well, and *I* am alter'd too; he was a plain, honest creature, when he kept a cheesemonger's shop in the Borough. Well, and *I* was a plain, honest creature too; but since the death of his brother, when he became a Baronet, his head runs on nothing but nobility; and, to crown all, he is writing his own history. His *memmors*, as he calls them, though poor man, he can scarcely write his name; but, notwithstanding, he is a good fellow, and so am I; I'm a good fellow——

Enter Mrs. O'Connor.

Mrs. O'C. We have remov'd the luggage, sir.

Tim. Very well, (*Sir Frederick speaks without*) silence! I hear, Sir Frederick. Be sure to address

him by his full title, Sir Frederick Augustus Pageant, Baronet.

Mrs. O'C. And your honour's name, is——

Tim. (affectedly) Mister Timothy. This way lies the larder.

[*Exit* TIMOTHY.

Enter Sir FREDERICK *and* WAITER, *speaking as he comes on.*

Sir F. This is a very *magnifishent* house, faith; something of the *Roman* cast about it—'tis quite *sumptuous*, I declare.

Mrs. O'C. Your most obedient, Sir Frederick, you are welcome to the most beautiful watering place in England, Sir Frederick.

Sir F. (aside) Come, this will do; she *foresees* that I'm a man of rank. You are the landlady, I *comprehend.*

Mrs. O'C. Yes, Sir Frederick Augustus——

Sir F. (aside) Augustus too! You can inform me in what part of *this here* town the nobility *presides?*

Mrs. O'C. They generally pass a few days at my house, Sir Frederick Augustus Pageant, Baronet.

Sir Fred. (aside) My name and title in full as I live. But which do you call the most *extinguished* part to live in?

Mrs. O'C. The *bacon.*

Sir Fred: (angrily aside.) What! Does she mean to affront me, by throwing *bacon* into my chops? What do you mean by *bacon?*

Mrs. O'C. The Bacon is a pleasant row of houses facing the sea, Sir Frederick Augustus—

Sir Fred. (aside) O! *Is* there any *shops*—I means houses to let in the Bacon, as you *calls* it?

Mrs, O'C. I believe there are, Sir Frederick Augustus Pageant.

Sir Fred. I wish you would enquire, and let me know—and harkee—send my *wallett* here.

Mrs. O'C. Your what, Sir Frederick?

Sir Fred. My *wallett*, my *intendant*, my cook, my butler,—

Mrs. O'C. What, all of them?

Sir F. Zounds? my man Tim.

Mrs. O'C. O! directly, Sir Frederick Augustus [*Exit Mrs. O'C. laughing.*

Sir F. Well, here I am, in Devonshire; and according to the landlady here, at the most beautiful place in the *unknown world.* A capital spot for me to complete my *memmors*, which I may some day or other publish, and so hand down my life in print to my *aneestors.* Let me see; this being my first trip, since I became a *barrownight.* I must not mix with the vulgar sort, for it is not fashionable, when a man is elevated, to recollect former friends; no, no, no. I'll scrape acquaintance with all the nobility in the town. And if I could but marry my neice to some man of *title!* Oh, how happy I should be! La! How my old neighbours would stare to see me—arm in arm with a lord, or a duke! (*walking about whimsically*)

Enter TIM.

Tim. Did you want me, Sir Frederick?

Sir F. (*not seeing* TIM) Or at Epsom races, to sit by the side of a duchess, in a *barrouch* and four.

Tim. Did you call, Sir Frederick Augustus?

Sir F. (*still walking about*) Invited to dine with all the nobility!

Tim. O, ho! if he has got among the nobility, I'll e'en go, for he must have his whim out. (*going*)

Sir F. (*seeing him*) Holloa! What do you want?

Tim. I understood you sent for me, Sir Frederick.

Sir F. Right, right. Come hither, Tim; make it as much known as you *possible* can, that Sir Frederick Augustus Pageant, *Barrownight*, and his

fair *neice*, Miss Charlotte Carolina Giordina Pageant, spinster, a rich heiress *has* just arrived; and Timmy, my boy, go to the post office, and ask if there *is* any letters for me (*aside*) *I don't expect none*. Give my name and title in full.

Tim. What, all of it! Augustus and all?—(*laughing.*)

Sir F. Yes, *all* of it. Go, go, and do as I bid: you will find me *reviewing* the landscape on the sea; I wish I had brought my *prospective* glass with me here. Ask the landlady if there's a *mathematician* shop in town, if so, to send me the best *mircroscope* they have. Mind *Mr. Cook*. [*Exit* Sir FREDERICK.

Tim. Mister Cook, indeed! I think my cookery will be of more use than your Memmors, Mister Cheesemonger. Because he has heard, that gentlemen keep *men cooks*, nothing would serve him, but I must undertake that office, besides all others in the family. To be sure, I knew nothing of cooking at first; but thanks to my good friend Mrs. Glasse, I begin to understand my business pretty well now. Though last Sunday I made a smal mistake; I had a green goose to dress for dinner, and my fire being bad for roasting, egad, I boiled it, and sent it in with oyster sauce.

MARTHA *speaks behind.*

Mar. Why, Timothy, Tim, I say, where are you?

Tim. Here comes another tormentor; she is almost as bad as Sir Frederick, her head is stuffed with nothing but high *seasoning*; and she is always aping the fine lady—tis Oh, shocking! O, horrid!

Enter MARTHA, *dressed in a tawdry manner.*

Mar. O, shocking! not dress'd yet? Is it here I find you, instead of being adjusting your honourable master's wardrobe, and making yourself a

little decent—Oh, horrid! Look at me—Oh monstrous!

Tim. (*sighing*) Oh, Martha!

Mar. (*scornfully*) O, trumpery!

Tim. (*aside*) True!

Mar. I am quite ashamed of you, 'tis quite shocking! go, go, and put yourself in a fit trim to be introduced to the rest of the gentlemen's gentlemen: you look truly barbarous! I can't bear the sight of you.

Tim. (*walking round her*) Martha Bee! how well that dress becomes you. I never saw you looking so well before.

Mar. (*quite pleased*) La! Do you think so, Tim?

Tim. 'Tis elegance itself!

Mar. Oh dear, Mister Timothy!

Enter WAITER.

Wai. Sir Frederick wants you. (*to* TIM)

Tim. Egad I forgot the post office.

[*Exit running.*

Wai. I beg pardon, I did not see your ladyship.

Mar. (*aside*) He takes me for a lady! How delightful!

Wai. I hope your ladyship will benefit from a dip in the ocean.

Mar (*aside*) Oh, horrid! Sir I thank you—but I am not quite a lady—I am only my young lady's lady.

Wai. I beg ten thousand pardons, I am very sorry——

Mar. O, never mind, never mind, 'tis not the first time, I have been taken for a—(*looks at herself*)—We are all liable to be mistaken. You are the master of this hotel, I presume.

Wai. No madam. Mistress is master here.

Mar. Pray sir, are there any good dancing masters here.

Wai. Yes, madam; there is one.

Mar. What countryman is he?

Wai. I believe he was born in this town.

Mar. Oh, horrible! does a bumpkin born and bred here, pretend to teach us young ladies Quadrilles and Waltzes?

Wai. No ma'am, he teaches young people of an evening, at sixpence a lesson.

Mar. Oh, I shall faint! Let us have a genteel dinner, and pray don't let any body join us, who are not of the same rank, for that would be truly shocking!

[*Exit Martha walking affectedly.*

Wai. There goes, if I mistake not, a precious lump of vanity!

Enter Mrs. O'Connor, *(in a pet.)*

Mrs. O'C. Hang it all! we can't detain these people for a single night.

Wai. Why ma'am?

Mrs. O'C. That comical little Baronet, has taken a house on the *Bacon*, and is going there immediately after dinner. Tell the porter to remove their luggage, and let us try to secure their custom, while they remain at Exmouth. [*Exit* Waiter. I never saw such a creature, as the man-servant is, he had not been in the house ten minutes, before he look'd in to the larder, examined the pots, pans, and kettles in the kitchen, and gave such a curious order for dinner that quite astonished the cook.—*(laughing)* Mister Timothy will remember going into the kitchen, the servants play'd him such comical tricks, well, I have not laughed so much since the day poor Mr. O'Connor died, no, no, the world has gone cross with me ever since, no one deigning to look with kindness on me, but Dennis M'Phane, and he is such a rover!

SONG.

Search Erin all over, you cannot discover
So fickle a lover as Dennis M'Phane.
The Simple and witty, the gay and the pretty,
In Town and in City, know Dennis M'Phane;
His flattering tongue, wins old and young,
Bewilders the senses, and puzzles the brain.
And yet you'll find, each maid inclin'd,
To listen with pleasure to Dennis M'Phane
Oh! get thee gone Dennis,
Thou'rt true to none Dennis,
But veering about like a light weather vane.
Oh! fie for shame, Dennis,
Thou'rt much to blame, Dennis,
But I Cannot blame thee, dear Dennis M'Phane.

From Cork to Kilkenny, you cannot find any,
Who've flatter'd so many, as Dennis M'Phane,
No creature has ever, with baneful endeavour,
More true lover's sever, than Dennis M'Phane:
His flatt'ring tongue, wins old and young,
Against the deluder they struggle in vain.
And yet you'll find, they're still inclin'd,
To listen with pleasure to Dennis M'Phane:
Oh! get thee gone &c.

SCENE II.

A Street.

Enter FRANKLIN, *dressed in a military great coat.*

Frank. Whilst my good father is flattering himself, that I am with my regiment at Dover, here am I "led by Love," at Exmouth! What that fellow Brisk, means to do next, heaven only knows. He certainly has been right enough hitherto. Where can he be? He promised to meet me here, after watching where Sir Frederick went to Lodge

Enter BRISK, *dressed as an Officer's servant, with cockade, &c.*

Brisk. (*singing as he comes on*) "I can tell very, &c.

Frank. Well, well, what news? Have you found where they are gone to? Have you——

Brisk. Don't hurry me, sir. Things go as well as you can possibly wish. They are gone into a house on the Beacon, where *I* mean to enter before to-morrow night.

Fran. You have brought me down here, now tell me what you intend to do?

Brisk Don't hurry me sir. I have a scheme, which I am sure will succeed.

Fran. What's that, tell me, tell me, I am impatient to——

Brisk. I see you are impatient. *But don't hurry me, sir.* Will you be satisfied, if I procure you an interview with Miss Pageant?

Fran. Yes, yes. But how, how?

Brisk. Don't hurry me. And if I should be fortunate enough to gain her uncle's consent, will you then be satisfied?

Fran. And consider myself the happiest fellow in the world! But that is impossible! for that silly old Baronet, has declared that his neice, shall be married *only* to a man of title.

Brisk. That's the very thing that will do your business. Sir Frederick is so wrapt in the nobility, that he may be easily imposed upon; particularly here, where there are so many strangers—I mean to create myself a duke!

Frank. A what?

Brisk. A duke!

Frank Ha! ha! ha! But how?

Brisk. Don't hurry me. Luckily for us, the head-waiter at the Inn, is an old fellow-servant of mine—he will assist me, I know. Besides, Martha, Miss Pageant's maid, and I, are———

Frank. Sweethearts. But to the question. How do you mean to proceed?——What—

Brisk. Don't hurry me, sir. (*aside*) Really these lovers ask so many questions in a breath——that a man of few words, like myself, can scarcely answer them.

Frank. What are you muttering?

Brisk. I was only arranging my ideas a little. You will have the goodness to write a letter to Miss Pageant, apprizing her of our intentions, and beg that she will join us, in an innocent trick, which we mean to play her uncle. My first visit shall be as Master of the Ceremonies.

Frank. Well, if you succeed——You know the reward.

Brisk. (*seriously*) Yes: I do know the reward; it is imprinted here: (*pointing to his breast*) You saved my father from a prison, by your bounty, and if I forget it, may I be——

Frank (*stopping his mouth.*) Off to the inn: I'll follow presently.

Brisk. Don't hurry me, sir. You should never hurry a man, who is willing to pay his debts.

[*Exit* BRISK.

Frank. That's an honest and a grateful fellow. Oh! if I shall obtain my Charlotte, what a happy life will I lead; and yet, I sometimes think, that I should feel ashamed of being connected with such an illiterate person as Sir Frederick is: but the accomplishments of the niece will compensate for the vulgarity of the uncle: Oh my beloved Charlotte!

SONG.

My pride would fain o'er come my love,
And every thought of thee remove,
And tempt me oft to leave thee;
But no! I swear by yon bright sun,
Until it cease its course to run,
I never will deceive thee,
No my love, no! &c.

It would be worse than death to thee,
To give a moment's pain to me,
Then shall I basely leave thee?
Oh no! I swear by yon bright sun,
Until it cease its course to run,
I never will deceive thee,
No My love, &c.
[*Exit* FRANKLIN.

SCENE III.

A Room in Sir FREDERICK's *House, with a View of the Sea.*

Sir FREDERICK *and* CHARLOTTE *discovered at breakfast.*

Sir F. My dear, I am quite *inchanted* with the place; the *views is* so *intensive*.

Char. It is a sweet place, indeed, sir.

Enter TIM.

Tim. A gentleman has just call'd; but when he found you were at breakfast, he said he would call again presently; he desired me to give you this *ticket*.

Sir F. (*Rising and coming forward, takes the card*) Bless my soul: who can it be! Let me see, (*reads*) "*Mr. Possett, M. C.*" Possett, Possett, M. C. (*as if endeavouring to recollect*) Some man cook, I suppose.

Tim. (*aside*) I hope so: for I am quite tired of roasting and stewing. [*Exit* TIM.

Char. (*coming forward*) The Master of the Ceremonies, more likely, sir: please to let me look, *reads*) "Mr. Poussette." O yes, it is.

Sir F. I am glad on't: he will give us some *reformation*, and perhaps introduce us to all the fashionables in the place. Receive him well, my dear.

Char. You may depend on that, sir.

Sir F. Talk *fine* to him.

Char. My dear uncle, pray don't *you* attempt to talk *fine*, as you call it.

Sir F. Why not, pray? What bespeaks a gentleman more, than his *confined* conversation.

Char. You mean *re*fined, sir.

Sir F. Well, *re*fined, then; but remember, I am a *Barrownight*, and my language *ought* to correspond with my title.

Char. Granted. But pray take my advice; at least, don't attempt to speak *French*.

Sir F. Why, miss? Is not French all the go?

Enter TIM.

Tim. Here comes the *man cook*, sir.

Sir F. Hold your tongue, you *stupe!* show the gentleman up. [*Exit* TIM.

Enter BRISK, *dress'd as Master of the Ceremonies.* CHARLOTTE *receives him politely, whilst* FREDERICK *is bowing and scraping in the most ridiculous manner.*

Brisk. Sir Frederick, your most obedient: madam, you are welcome to Exmouth; I shall be proud to introduce you to our distinguished visitors; the name of Sir Frederick, Augustus, Pageant. Baronet, is not unknown to me.

Sir F. (*rather alarmed*) *Known* to you, did you say, Mr. *Possett.*

Brisk. Yes. Sir Frederick

Sir F. (*aside*) I hope he doesn't remember my keeping shop in Tooley-street!

Sir F. You have breakfasted, I *assume*, Mr. Possett.

Brisk. I thank you, I have.

Sir F. Will you take any thing, by way of a

nunch? I can give you a capital rasher of bacon, a bit of real Wiltshire, which I brought with me from town.

Brisk. Not any, I thank you, Allow me to show you the list of subscribers to our balls. Your name, with that of your fair niece, I shall be proud to add. [*Gives a paper to Sir Frederick; who receives it with great ceremony*) While *you* look at the gentleman's list, Sir Frederick, *you madam,* may amuse yourself with *that* of the ladies'. *(gives a letter)*

Brisk. You will find *there,* Sir Frederick, the names of some of our most ancient and noble families. And *you* will find there, ma'am, the motive of my visit here, please to signify your pleasure. *(makes signs for her to write an answer.)*

Sir F (Who has been examining the list) "The Duke of Sparto!" who is he, pray?

Char. (aside, but loud enough for Sir FRED *to hear, as she retires to write an answer.)* "My dear Franklin!"

Sir Fred. (*hearing her*) Who?

Brisk. Our leading personage here; a Spanish Duke; the most affable, agreeable, accomplished noblemen in the world. One of your *grandees,* Sir Frederick. I shall be proud of the honor of introducing you to his serene highness.

Sir F. Will you? ten thousand thanks to you, my worthy Mr. Possett (*whispering*) tell him, I am rich! tell him I am worth a plumb! and not unworthy of his mighty notice.

Brisk. Aye, aye: he is one of your true nobility, Sir Frederick.

Sir F. My dear Mr. Possett, pray tell me what true nobility is.

Brisk. Why, Sir Frederick, I should call that man truly noble, who would make those around him *happy* by his munificence, and *good* by his examples.

Sir F. (*aside*) I'll do that, please the pigs!

Char. (*aside, recognizing Brisk*) Brisk! as I live! What an artful fellow! I must assist them.

Brisk. I conclude that *pleasure* alone brought you to Exmouth, Sir Frederick?

Sir F. O, yes, yes.

Brisk. I am glad that *bad health* was not the cause.

Sir F. Bad health! Bless ye, Mr. Possett; I never *know'd* what sickness was, in all my born days.

Brisk. What, not the gout

Sir F. The gout!

Brisk. Yes, the gout.

Sir F. Bless you, I never had it in my life!

Brisk. What! never had the gout! For heaven's sake, don't say so to any body.

Sir F. (*alarm'd*) Why, why, my dear friend?

Brisk. You will not be considered a *gentleman*, unless you have a fit annually.

Sir F. You astonish me!

Brisk. I'll manage it for you.

Sir F. How! how!

Brisk. You shall have all the honour of the complaint, without its pains, if you will only consent to confine yourself for a few days to your chamber.

Sir F. I'll do any thing in the world.

Brisk. Speak to the *Duke* about it; tell him you feel a touch now and then, his highness will have a greater opinion of your rank. To give an eclat to your visit here, you must be at *home* some evening.

Sir F. Bless ye, I am always at home.

Brisk. I mean, you must give a concert. Are you fond of musick, Sir Frederick?

Sir F. Oh, *superfluously*. I am a bit of an *epicure;* I can play several tunes on the German flute.

Brisk. His Highness will be glad to hear that.

Sir F. When do you think you can do me the *superlative* honor of introducing me to the Duke of Sparto

Brisk. He will call upon you, I dare say.

Sir F. Call upon me!

(CHARLOTTE *attends and comes forward.*)

Brisk. Yes, sir; to-morrow morning, I make no doubt; I shall see him this evening, and shall make honourable mention of you. His Highness makes a point of paying particular attention to every person of *rank*, whom I may recommend to his notice. In short, he does nothing without consulting me.

Sir F. Oh, sir: You are too *exquisite.*

Brisk (looking archly at Charlotte.) To-morrow morning, about twelve o'clock, you may expect his Highness. Of course, Sir Frederick, you will subscribe to this list.

Sir F. Oh, certainly, certainly.

Brisk. And you, madam, I hope *have* subscribed to that.

Char. I have, (*giving him a letter.*)

Sir F. Aye, do, my dear; do any thing Mr. Possett commends to you.

Brisk. (*to Sir F.*) I would not have you stir out, until you are properly introduced. In the course of the day, I shall call again (*whispering Sir F.*) don't forget the *gout* when the Duke calls.

Sir F. I won't, I won't.

Brisk. Sir Frederick Augustus Pageant, Baronet, good morning. Miss Pageant, your most obedient.

[*Exit* BRISK.

Sir F. Bon swa, bon swa, my dear Mr. Possett.

Char. You should have said—Bon jour.

Sir F. O never mind; he knows what I mean fast enough. (*aside*) What an honour! A real duke to call upon me—I will invite him to dine with me! I will give him such a feast! Come child, prepare your best bib and tucker, and make yourself look *amicable!* If the Duke's single, who knows but he may fall in love with you! (*aside, and walking about*) Then I shall be uncle to a *Spanish*

Grandee! The Duke and Duchess of Sparto! Don Frederick Augustus Pageant, Barrownight!

[*Exit* Sir FREDERICK, *lifting up his hands.*

Charlotte. Poor Uncle! Little do you know *who* the Duke of Sparto will be! Well, Franklin has given strong proofs of his attachment. Brisk is confident of gaining my Uncle's consent, if I will only assist in a few innocent stratagems; *that* I will with all my heart! But suppose after all, Franklin should deceive me! Alas! should *that* be the case, adieu to love for ever!

RONDO.

Fly, fly away, tormenting love,
No more will I thy victim prove,
Fly, fly away, &c.
Too long hast thou with wily art,
In bondage held my simple heart,
Fly, fly away, tormenting love,
No more will I thy victim prove,
Fly, fly away, &c.

Both night and day,
With tyrant sway,
Hast thou disturb'd my rest;
Each wonton smile,
Was but a wile,
To rob me of my rest!
Fly, fly away, tormenting love,
No more will I thy victim prove,
Fly, fly away, &c.

Enter TIMOTHY (*to* CHARLOTTE.)

Dress'd like a cook. a long slip of paper in his hand.

TIM. (*looking at his paper*) Sir Frederick is pleased to say, he wants you, Miss.

Char. Where is my Uncle?

Tim. (*still looking at the paper*) On the side-board.

Char. Where?

Tim. (*looking at the paper*) In a large blue and white dish!

Char. Bless my heart. [*Exit* CHARLOTTE.

Tim. My master tells me, that some grand duke

is to dine with him shortly. Now, I am a little puzzled to know what to provide. I wish Mrs. Glasse had put down what would suit a duke. Egad, I have it, I'll consult the *oracle,* the *Cooke's Oracle,** I dare say I shall find it there. I have got a pretty good bill of fare here already: but I must add a few things more.

Enter Sir FREDERICK *with a MSS. in his hand.*

Sir F. I think the Duke will be delighted with my *memmors.* Perhaps the may ask me to read them. In that case I must perfect myself a little.

(*Reading.*) " I was born on the first of April"

Tim. (*marking down in his paper*) gooseberry fool.

Sir F. One thousand, seven hundred and fifty-six.

Tim, (*marking*) Apple pies.

Sir F. Cut the first tooth on Christmas-day.

Tim. Mince pies.

Sir F. At four years of age.

Tim. A chicken.

Sir F. I went to school, and was—

Tim. Well basted——

Sir F. I was consider'd——

Tim. (*louder*) A goose!

Sir F. (*seeing him*) Who the devil calls Sir Frederick Augustus Pageant, goose?

Tim, I was only arranging the dinner for his Highness, the Duke—

Sir F. Is that all?—Let it be a downright substantial English dinner.

Tim. I shall, Sir Frederick—here is the bill of fare.

Sir F. Let me see, what hast thou got down? (*Takes the paper, and reads*) First course—A boil'd leg of mutton and turnips——Good. A round of

* An excellent Cookery Book, by Dr. Kitchener.

beef and cabbage——Good again. A piece of pickled pork and pease pudding——Oh excellent!

Tim. (*quite pleased*) An't it, Sir? That's the first course. Mrs. Glasse says, that boil'd things should be served first. But, go on, sir,——go on.

Sir F. (*reading*) Second course, Ribs of beef and horse-raddish. A shoulder of mutton and onion sauce. (*Smacking his lips*) Oh delicious.

Tim. Is it not beautiful, sir? I'll be bound his Highness will like it.

Sir F. (*reading*) A toad in the hole. What's that?

Tim. Why, don't you know?

Sir F. No.

Tim. (*aside*) Bless his simple head; then you shall see to-morrow.

Sir F. (*reading*) Pastry. Norfolk dumplings. A Yorkshire pudding. Capital!

Tim. An't it? Egad, I think his Highness never sat down to such a dinner before.

Sir F. (*returning the paper, and assuming a dignified air*) That will do. But let me caution you of one thing, Tim, while we are at dinner, not to laugh at my jokes. Don't interrupt me if I sing; and if you find me throwing the hatchet a little-don't contradict me, but allow me the privilege of other great men; that is, to say one thing, and mean another. Now, Tim, be active, and see that our table be well *deranged*.

DUETT.

Sir F. Let the table be well laid;
Tim. d'ye hear me, Tim, d'ye hear?
Tim. Now my bill of fare is made,
Never fear me, never fear.
Sir F. Plates and dishes.
Tim. Sauce and fishes.

Sir F. Beef and mustard.
Tim. Tarts and custard.
Both. And instead of lemonade,
Wine to cheer us, wine to cheer!

Sir F. Pay attention to his Grace,
Tim, d'ye hear me, Tim, d'ye hear
Tim. I'll be ever in my place,
Never fear me, never fear.
Sir F. Pickl'd Salmon,
Tim. Greens and gammon.
Sir F. Mind the ham, Tim.
Tim. How he'll cram him.
Both. And to fill each vacant space,
Wine to cheer us, wine to cheer!

[*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Drawing Room in* Sir FREDERICK'S *House, a Sofa, &c.*

Sir F. (dress'd very gay) discovered reading, coming forward, and looking at his watch.

Sir F. 'Tis near twelve o'clock, the time appointed by his Grace I am all in a twitteration Let me see—what position I shall be in when he enters?—Reading?—No—sitting carelessly on the *sofa*. thus?—No—I'll meet him in this here *kind of* manner, *Half bending his body and making an affected bow.*)

Enter TIM. (*running in.*)

Tim. O, sir! sir! here comes the Duke.

Sir F. (quite alarmed) Bless my soul! what's the matter with me!—I—I—I never spoke to a Duke in all my life; I—I am all in a muck, I'll *astonish* him with some hard word, and convince him at once, that Sir Frederick Augustus Pageant, Baronet, knows what's what!

Enter BRISK. (TIM *shows him in, and Exit.*)

Dressed in a military coat, trimmed with fur, large mustachios, &c. approaching Sir FREDERICK *very pompously, while he is bowing and scraping in the most ridiculous manner.*

Brisk, Sir Frederick, I salute you; (*gives him a hug.*

Sir F. I am enthusiastically proud to see your high mightiness, and thank you most bountifully for this strong mark of your *premature* intentions.

Brisk. Where is your beautiful Niece!—fame speaks highly of her accomplishments.

Sir F. The wench is well enough.

Brisk I am happy to see you at Exmouth, it is an enchanting spot; but have a care, Sir Frederick, that you are not imposed upon.

Sir F. Bless your Highness, I am up to snuff.

Brisk. Up to what?

Sir F. I means—I—I—I knows which way the cat jumps.

Brisk. Ha! ha! that's very good; really you have good apartments here? Is your establishment large?

Sir F. A nan?

Brisk. That is, are your domestics numerous?

Sir F. (*aside*) Now I'm bother'd.

Brisk. How many does your family consist of?

Sir F. O! why, your Highness, we are but few; there's myself and Tim, and my Niece and Martha, all in a family way: oh dear! O! O! *as if seized with a touch of the gout.*

Brisk. What's the matter!

Sir F. (*rubbing his legs*) Only my old complaint, the gout, the gout, your Highness.

Brisk. Oh! that's a constant attendant on men of rank. What do you generally take, Sir Frederick?

Sir F. A little peppermint water.

Brisk. An excellent remedy. But her ladyship; is Lady Pageant of the party?

Sir F. Bless you, there's no Lady Pageant; I never was married; I was nearly caught though once; but I, luckily, found out, before the happy knot was tied, some of my intended's qualifications.

Brisk. Aye, what were they?

Sir F. I'll tell you.

SONG.

Miss Molly Wilkins was a lass,
Who for an angel sure might pass,
Did she not like so well the glass,
Naughty Poll.
I own I lov'd Poll Wilkins true,
But of her failings nothing knew,
For Poll was sly and artful too,
Cunning Poll.

At length was fixt our wedding day,
And Poll to make her spirits gay,
Got drunk, and on the ground she lay,
Naughty Poll.

I left her senseless on the floor,
So off I went and never more,
Set foot in Polly Wilkins' door,
Silly Poll.

To win me o'er she took great pains,
But *Fred* a drunken wife disdains,
So single still poor Poll remains,
Wretched Poll,
Ye ladies take a hint from me,
Ne'er with the bottle make too free,
Until you safely married be,
Think of Poll.

Brisk. (*after the song*) Bless my stars, who is that angel?

Sir F. My Niece, your mightiness.

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Sir F. (*introducing them*) My dear, *this here* is the Duke of Sparto. My Lord, *that 'are* is my Niece.—His Highness has done us the honour of looking in upon us.

Char. (*looking archly at Brisk*) The Duke is very attentive.

Enter MARTHA.

(*On seeing the Duke, she bursts into a loud laugh.*)

Mar. Ha! ha! Oh frightful!

Sir F. What do you laugh at, you intolerable hussey?

Mar At that gentleman's long beard.

Sir F. Gentleman! he is no gentleman; he's a Duke! I hope your Grace is not offended with that imperious girl!

Brisk. Not at all, not at all; if all those who wear mustachios, were to be offended every time they are laugh'd at, they would be but seldom in a good humour.

Sir F. (*To Martha*) Pay your dutiful respects to his Highness,

Mar. I hope your dukeship is well.

Brisk. Very well, my pretty maid. (*shakes her by the hand.*)

Sir F. Will your Highness walk into *the enjoining* room, and take some *repastment.*

Brisk. With all my heart.

Sir F. I have prepared a little *De june* for you.

[*Exeunt* BRISK *leading* CHARLOTTE, Sir F. *following pompously.*

Mar. Well! if I hav'nt been shaking hands with a duke! Oh delightful! this makes the old gypsy's words good; she told me that as sure as my name was Martha Bee, I should be a great lady before I died; oh charming! well, I think the duke has taste (*walking about admiring herself,*) and he might go farther and fare worse. La! how it must mortify my young lady to find the duke has give me the preference. If I was only a head taller, I should make as good a duchess as any of them. Oh! what style I would live in. I'd always speak with

an elegant smile on my countenance, and when seated at dinner, surrounded by lords and ladies, I'd say, "pray, my lady, allow me to send you a little more tongue"—"not any, I thank your grace ——I've got quite enough;"——"permit me to send your lordship a little salmon; or perhaps your lordship would prefer a little *plaice*"——then I'd have a bunch of fifty feathers on my head, which would go niddy noddy, niddy noddy, (*walkin, about affectedly*)——then I'd order the servants about with such an air——Egad, I'd make them fly at the very sight of me.

SONG.

If e'er I should marry a lord,
A right merry life I will pass,
I'd loll in my carriage at ease,
And peep at my friends thro' my glass.
To all the great folks I might meet,
I'd nod and look knowingly too,
While lords, dukes and ladies would say,
"Good morning my lady, how do?"
Lirra la lirra la!

La! how my acquaintance would stare,
And envy their friend Martha Bee,
I'd look on them all with disdain,
If e'er they presumed to make free,
The concerts and balls I'd attend,
And play at *All Fours, or at Loo!*
While lords, dukes and ladies would say,
"My lady, dear lady, how do?"
Lirra la lirra la!

[*Exit* MARTHA.

SCENE III.

Room at the Inn.

Enter FRANKLIN.

Fran. I am astonished at that fellow Brisk—— he has certainly got the upper hand of Sir Frederick; but here he comes; well, what news?

Enter BRISK.

(Dressed as FRANKLIN'S *Servant,)*

Brisk. Don't hurry me; we are in the right path, I have completely bothered old Pageant and have just given him a fit of the gout.

Fran. A what?

Brisk. A fit of the gout.

Fran. Ha! ha!

Brisk. 'Tis true: he is now laid up, and you may have an interview with Miss Pageant as soon as you please.

Fran. This instant.

Brisk. Don't hurry me, sir. In order that time may be allowed for a letter to be sent to London, and an answer received—I shall confine him for three or four days.

Fran. What do you mean by a letter?

Brisk. Don't hurry me, sir. I shall write a letter, and direct it to the Duke of Sparto, as if coming from a nobleman in London. *This* I mean to drop so that Sir Frederick may pick it up.

Fran. But what do you mean to write?

Brisk. Don't hurry me, sir. As we go up the hill I'll tell you.

Fran. Away, then, away. (*pushes him off.*)

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

A Room in Sir FREDERICK's *House.*

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Char. Brisk has actually persuaded my uncle that he's got the gout, and there he is voluntarily confining himself—because, forsooth, he thinks it fashionable.

Enter JAMES.

Jam. Mr. Franklin is below, Miss.

Char. Desire him to walk up. [*Exit* JAMES. 'Tis some time since we met. Heigho!

Enter FRANKLIN.

Fran. My dear Charlotte, this is the happiest moment I have experienced since last I saw you—Brisk has done wonders for us.

Char. He has, indeed.

Fran. And should he succeed, as he flatters himself he shall—may I hope?———

Char. My dear Charles, you know my sentiments, there is my hand.

Fran. I receive it as an inestimable treasure, and would not loose it for the universe.

DUETT.

Than part from those we dearly love,
'Twere better not to live;
For ah! what can the pangs remove
That days of absence give.
Alas! alas!
To sever for ever,
Were worse than death to me:
And, oh! twere vain
To hide the pain
I'd feel when torn thee.

'I ho' *hope* might cheer my anxious breast,
Still *fear* would damp my joy,
And fancied ills, would break my rest,
And all my peace destroy.
Alas! &c.

POLACCA.

Faithful love, devoid of art,
Lives for ever in the heart;
Like the glorious orb of light
Burning ever—ever bright.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter TIMOTHY, *with a bottle and glass.*

Tim. Ha! ha! ha! well, this is a good joke; egad, if my silly old master does not pretend that he has got the gout—ha! ha! ha!—his mightiness, the duke, has ordered him to drink plenty of wine, to keep the disorder from his stomach! O (*as if seized with a pain*) what's the matter with me? talking of the gout has given me a pain in my (*feeling his stomach*) egad, I'll take a glass of wine, it may do me good (*fills and drinks*) bless my soul, this is brandy! O! dear, dear, how lucky it is I have tasted it. It might have kill'd my poor master (*fills and drinks again*) come, that will do; I am much better now; I wonder how I should look, with my legs wrapt up, and sitting as Sir Frederick does.

He sits on one chair, and puts his legs on another, and covers them with a towel.

Enter MARTHA,

Behind him, she pulls the chair, TIM *falls, gets up after some trouble, is a little tipsy, but not too much so.*

Tim. Hey day! what's that for? Halloo! what's

the matter now, I wonder? Why Martha, my dear.

Mar. (*walking about fantastically*) Your dear! keep off: keep off: I am not to be spoken to by such as you!

Tim. Highty tighty! What's in the wind, now, I marvel

Mar. The duke, sir———

Tim. The duke?

Mar. Yes, sir, the duke squeezed my hand, last night, and said he loved me.

Tim. (*singing*) "Tol de rol, fol de rol," &c.

Mar. (*imitating him*) You may "tol de rol, and fol de rol," as much as you please, but 'tis really so.

Tim. Have a care, Martha; remember: pie-crust once broken, cannot be mended: ha! ha! ha? Mrs. Duchess.

Mar. Mr. Pie-crust.

DUETT.

Mar. Away, you lout.
Tim. Nay, do not flout,
I'll not offend your Grace.
Mar. Begone, begone.
Tim. I will anon.
Mar. Or else I'll slap your face.
Both.
She. He, he, don't talk to me.
He. Ha, ha!—Poor Martha Bee.

Tim. A pardon grant,
Mar. Indeed I sha'n't,
You have insulted me;
Tim. Well, well, forgive,
Mar. Not while I live.
Tim. Oh! cruel Martha Bee.
Both.
She. He, he! away from me!
He. Ha! ha!—Oh! Martha Bee!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

Sir FREDERICK *(with his legs wrapt in flannel) and* BRISK, *discovered at table, with glasses, &c.—a sideboard with glasses, &c.*

All. (*laughing*) Ha, ha, ha!

Sir F. Why. Tim, where are you *?*

Enter TIM *with a bottle of wine.*

Tim. Here, your honour.

Brisk. Now, my dear Fred—sing that catch again.

Sir F. La, your highness! I am no singer—I *hav'nt got no voice.*

Brisk. Never mind, never mind; let us have it.

Sir F. Well, then, pray bear a bob, *(aside to* TIM) I say. Tim, remember what I told you last night, don't interrupt me while I'm singing. (TIM *nods.*)

SOLO.

Sweetly rung the village bells, when Tom made Sue his bride,
But more sweet, quoth Tom, the knell, that toll'd when Susan died.

La, your highness don't help a body.

Brisk. Well, we'll begin again.

ROUND.

Sweetly rang the village bells, when Tom made Sue his bride,
But more sweet, quoth Tom, the knell that toll'd when Susan died!

Sir FREDERICK *begins*; BRISK *follows once through; then* TIM, *who is all anxiety to join, can contain himself no longer—he takes two glasses and joins in the round, jingling the glasses, and at last breaks them.*

Brisk. Bravo! Bravo!

Tim. Bravo! Bravo!

Sir F. Tim, hold your tongue. (*drives him off*)

[*Exit* TIM.

Brisk. O, never mind him. How do you find yourself, Fred?

Sir F. Comma voos, comma voos, as the French says.

Brisk. How is the gout?

Sir F. Oh, its a going off—Your highness' jokes and the glass *has* quite *revived* me.

Brisk. Well, I must leave you for a short time. I shall bring my friend, Franklin with me, who, between you and me, is quite smitten with your niece.

Sir F. I shall be proud to see him, or indeed any illustrious friend of your mightiness.

Brisk. Adieu, I must go. (*Takes out his pocket-handkerchief, and drops a letter.*)

Sir F. Adieu, adieu! make haste back.

Brisk. In half an hour.—Farewell Fred.; good bye Freddy. [*Exit.*

Sir F. Bon mot; bon mot. A finer *feller* never lived. He will certainly speak a good word for me at court—(*sees the letter*) Hah! what's this? A letter directed to the duke, as I live! (*looking around*) Any body near? No; I'll just take a peep, there *can't* be *no* harm in a little peep. Bless me! what a noble seal.——(*Reads*) " My dear Sparto,—I have inserted the name of your friend, the baronet, and

you may rest assured that he will be included in the —— next — batch of peers. But as you wish to surprize him, he shall never hear of it until he sees it in the Gazettee."

As sure as *eggs is eggs*, that must be me. Huzza, hazza! (*capering about*) *Reads*, "From the manner you speak of the charms of Miss Pageant, I don't wonder that my Lo—— my *Lord Franklin* has lost his heart. So you *pass* his *lordship* on your friend, as plain *Mister Franklin*. He'll be an excellent match for his niece, being related to the most ancient families in the kingdom."

"I remain,

"Yours, &c.

"H. U. M."

(*Rings the bell*) mercy on me what strage events *incur* in this world; within there! (*calling*)

Enter JAMES

Tell my Niece to come to me immediately; (*Exit* SERVANT) she shall marry him, yes she shall, whether she will or not, I'll have no excuse. Marry my *Lord* Franklin she must.——

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Char. I wait your pleasure, sir.

Sir F. Come hither child. I have wonders to tell you, but read, read, and you will know all. (*gives the letter, he walks about very anxiously while she is reading*) My lord Pageant! my lady Franklin, Oh! my lucky, lucky stars, well, well, what think you my dear?

Char. 'Tis certainly very generous of the duke.

Sir F. And what think you, of my *Lord* Franklin? Why my dear, could you not see that he was a *Lord* when he call'd?

Char. Indeed I could not.

Sir F. Bless your poor weak *foresight.* I say should he make you an offer, he shall have you, I don't wish to *force* you, but you *shall* and *must* marry him.

Char. Whether I like him or not?

Sir F. To be sure, isn't he a lord?

Char. But my dear uncle.

Sir F. I'll have no *Buts,* I'll have no excuse

Enter JAMES.

Jas. The Duke of Sparto and Mr. Franklin. [*Exit.*

Enter BRISK *and* FRANKLIN.

Brisk. Here we are Fred, my friend, *Mister Franklin* (*introducing him*) Fred, Frank; Frank, Fred.

Sir F. (*to Franklin*) Sir, I am happy to see you, (*aside*) bless my soul I should have known that he was a *Lord* in a minute, there is ancient nobility *engrafted* on his countenance. (BRISK *and* CHARLOTTE *retire*) Any peculiar news, Mister Franklin?

Fran. Not that I have heard of.

Sir F. Any *commotions* in the Army or Navy, any new *Knights,* or *Lords* made lately, Mister Franklin.

Fran. Not very lately, but a new batch of Peers is spoken of, (*whispering*) and perhaps you may see a name among them, you may know. (*retires*)

Sir F. That must be me.

Brisk. (*Goes on the other side and whispers,* Sir *F.* FRANKLIN *returns to* CHARLOTTE) Let them alone if your niece can make a conquest of that gentleman, it will not be a bad match for her, although he is not a lord.

Sir Fred. (*aside, laughing*) Not a Lord; that's a good'an. Be he what he may, if you recom-

mend, and *he* likes the wench, he shall have her.

Brisk. Look, look, Fred, they seem to understand one another already.

Sir Fred. O, the coaking jade!

Brisk. I will call my friend aside, and ask him what he thinks of her.

Sir Fred. Aye, do, do, your highness; I'll speak to my niece, and know her sentiments. (*Pushes him on, and beckons Charlotte, who comes forward. —to Charlotte,*) What do you think of his lordship?

Char. Since you will not allow me to explain, I consent.

Sir F, (*embracing her*) Oh, my dear girl! this is as it should be; my wish will be accomplished; You'll be a lady, and who knows, but I may be a lord!

Brisk. All's right: let them be united.

Sir Fred. Come forward, children: (*to Franklin*) The Duke tells me, that you think favourably of my Niece; and she, if I read her eyes rightly, does not think otherwise of you, *Mister* Franklin. If you have no objection, I am sure *I* have none. There (*joins their hands*) Heavens bless you! with my Niece, and a fortune of £30,000.

Brisk. (*aside*) That will do very well for us.

Frank. This is more than I could have expected. But, sir, you ought to make some enquiries respecting my family, and my circumstances.

Sir Fred. Pshaw! pshaw—nonsense, I only consult the happiness of my Niece, make her so, and I'm content.

nter TIMOTHY *and* MARTHA (*quarrelling as they come on.*)

Mar. I'll speak to his highness.

Brisk. Ah, my sweet one! Sir Frederick, I have taken a great fancy to this pretty girl, and would marry her, but I hear she is engaged.

Mar. Who? I! I—engaged—No, no, no, no such thing.

Char. Surely you have not forgotten Mr. Brisk, Martha!

Mar. Oh, monstrous! pray don't name the fellow to me, I can't bear the thoughts of him---Oh horrid!

Brisk. (*Takes off his great coat and mustachios, and appears as Mr. Pousette, Martha looks with astonishment.*

Brisk. Very well, ma'am, if you refuse *Brisk,* you will lose the duke.

Tim. Ha! ha! ha! that's just as it should be.

Sir F. Bless me, Mr. *Possett!*

Brisk. (*takes off another coat, and appears as Franklin's valet.*) No longer Mr. Poussette, nor the Duke of Sparto, but plain *Brisk,* this gentleman's valet, and your humble servant.

Sir F. (*to Franklin*) and are you not a lord, *Frank?* I never told you I was.

Sir F. And an't I to be in the next batch of peers?

Tim. Here's a mess!

Mar. An't I to be a duchess; Mr. Brisk, and won't you marry me?

Brisk. Don't hurry me, matrimony is a serious thing.

Tim. Here's a hodge-podge.

Fran. Come, come, Sir Fred, you have made choice of a gentleman, who will make your niece happy, and that's all you aim'd at.

Brisk. Fred, how's the gout?

Sir F. D——n the gout---Well, well, I think I brought all this on myself——I have given my word, and I will not *contract,* I never knew a cheesemonger to break his word; and, I believe, after all, that to be truly noble, is to be truly good. Thus, thus, I blow from me forever---all HIGH NOTIONS.

FINALE.

Our grateful thanks are ever due,
Most kind and generous friends to you,
Oh! let your cheering smiles reward,
The efforts of our humble Bard.

CHORUS.

Our grateful thanks &c.

FINIS.

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A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS,

BY

THOMAS JAMES SERLE, Comedian.

LONDON:

PUBLISHED BY JOHN CHAPPELL AND SON,

ROYAL EXCHANGE.

1819.

PREFACE.

The following Play has certainly no extrinsic attraction to recommend it. Its Title Page can boast neither of "horrors" nor "mysteries." No "Spectres" glare with delightful portent in capital letters on the cover; nor does a "Robber's Cave" or a "Haunted Tower" invite the reader to pry into its recesses, or magnanimously slumber amidst its apparitions. All this might be pardoned if underneath were seen those magic words

denoting its reception at a Theatre Royal, to have been "successful," "the applause enthusiastic," or "the effect electric;" such terms would respectively denote a run of three, six, or nine nights; but alas! gentle reader — if reader indeed there be, the Manager to whom it was presented denied it even the privilege of damnation; so that the very spleen of critics, that second rank of praise and source of fame, is withheld from it. Yet, might I hope to see it, with binding duly lettered, in the majesty of repose, and the veneration of dust, resting upon the shelves of some would-be bookworm, could I boast a name dignified by notoriety, or adorned with any of those mystic initials which, like the tails of a periwig, confer importance on D.D.'s, F.R.S.'s, and A.S.S.'s of all sorts. But the simple actor will out, and the only way to redeem all is to borrow the lustre of a permitted dedication. Every lord is by birth a patron of literature,

every M.P. a genius, virtute officii, *and can there be a paucity of wits, when so many lay claim to the distinction, as holding shares in the Theatre of Garrick and Sheridan? Even this resource, however, I cannot or I will not use, and thus the work must stand or fall by its own intrinsic merit. As a drama, it has been rejected, and be its author's opinion what it may, its publication is no appeal from the justice of that decision. As a poem it must now be considered, and should it ever be its author's fate to personate his own imagination, or to see it realized by others, it will then become the duty of the public to repress his arrogance, or encourage his just pretensions, as the dramatic effect may merit their displeasure or applause.*

PROLOGUE.

(Enter the Genius of Prologue, habited in a black gown.)

Once more, to greet a British Theatre,
Do I, the genius of old prologue, come,
From you to ask a boon due to my age,
And those delights which, in a better time,
I gave your forefathers: to you I come
To beg your patient hearing of my cause.
While Marlow painted, with a sweeping hand,
The wond'rous workings of tumultuous minds,
I held a plain, but just and useful, office,
To shew the moral ere the play began,
That men might catch instruction with delight,
And view, indeed, a mirror of their minds.
Shakspeare, whose soul of alchemy could turn
The dullest dregs of nature into fire,
Gave me a swelling and more lofty strain,
And bade me, ere his martial king appeared,
Announce his entry with high sounding words
That breath'd the trumpet's voice in every line,
And great imaginations that conveyed
The soul back to the very field of war;
And to his mast'ry who would not obey,
And minister to his unearthly greatness?

PROLOGUE.

Jonson, severely conscious of his worth,
Made me the organ of his bold appeal
To reason and to learning, and by me
Taught men to judge him by his own just rule;
And sometimes, lifted past his usual nature,
Condemn'd and brav'd the follies of the time.
Then came a troop with Dryden at their head;
He scarcely owning them, but they delighted
With his example, that 'gan swell me up
With high and bombast sentences, and mirth
Began to steal upon my sober face.
Meanwhile my sister Epilogue, debauch'd
With low and ribald jests, no more address'd
The town with Rosalind's mirthful innocence:
Nor could the example of Pope's critic pen,
Nor Johnson's just and noble sentiment,
Redeem me from unworthy gaieties;
From this the better morals of the age,
Perchance its dulness, now have rescued me:
But still the trembling sycophant by me
Brays out in fears his unpoetic baseness,
Or buys your suffrage with a very list
Of weak excuses, which he hopes are needless.
To you I come to save me from this fate,
I was ordain'd for great men's greatest purpose;
In me you should behold the power of truth
Pointing with magic finger to the Scene,
And tracing in't the heartfelt application,
Making the guilty turn with paly cheek,
As they consider of my fearful words,
Shewing to man with nice discrimination

PROLOGUE.

The causes that provoke a tragic end;
Speaking a noble, just, and moral truth,
And then enforcing it by great example.
To night we offer to your good attention,
The picture of a selfish sensualist,
One trick'd with many meretricious virtues—
False courage, generosity and coolness,
And able to do much—yet doing nought,
Save for himself—a man of worldly wisdom—
Mark him, and ponder deeply on the scene,
And turn the mind from listless apathy
To fit amusement for a human soul:
This reward claims our author—I have done,
And to your favor leave our bold attempt.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DUKE OF MANTUA,

RAFFAELLE CIMARO,
CLAUDIO,
ALPHONSO,
LODOVICO,
MANLIO,
LORENZO,
VENILLA,
} *Mantuan Noblemen.*

JULIO. *Servant to Raffaelle.*

LAWYER, MONK, AND PEASANT.

LOUISA DE COMMENES.

MARIA, *her Servant.*

Senators, Gentlemen, Ladies, Attendants, &c.

SCENE, *MANTUA.*

RAFFAELLE CIMARO.

ACT I.

SCENE I. A STREET IN MANTUA.

Enter Claudio and Lawyer.

Claudio. And when, sir, will the duke decide this suit?

Lawyer. 'Tis thought within two days.

Claudio. I trust 'twill be so!
To linger in incertitude's the sum
Of human ills; the wreck'd and toil-spent shipman,
Who meets a fix'd, inevitable fate,
Feels less of agony, than he whose fortune
Casts him upon a drear and desart rock,
To watch, with credulous eye, th' horizon round,
And form each vap'ry speck into a succour,
And, sickening with hope, to die anew
With every fading object of his fancy.
I'd rather perish by the assassin's sword,

Than live the gen'ral theme of sland'rous tongues,
The mark for ev'ry dull plebeian's pity,
The accus'd of murder.

Lawyer. This will clear your fame,
And free your honor from all stain.

Claudio. Oh no!
Honour, once wounded, never can be heal'd;
It is all over vital, and the wound
That stabs it—kills, 'tis tender as the down
That paints the gay and sportive butterfly,
Touch it—the bright and golden covering flies,
And leaves an earth-born worm;
As weak as is the timorous sensitive plant
Than shrivels at the approach — and more inconstant
Than weightless atoms trembling in the sunbeam

Lawyer. 'Tis too fantastic for a lawyer's thought.
'Twas well, sir, that Lorenzo saw the affray,
Your case were else more doubtful, as it is
You've little cause for fear—two friends I think.

Claudio. Aye, sir, they were so: if they be so now,
Fortune perhaps has not deserted me:
Men's minds are oft the index of our fates,
And as our friendships slacken we may read
Our downfall. Nay, stay with me; you'll much favour me,
To cheer me with your company and counsel.

Enter Lodovico and Alphonso.

Lodovico. Good morrow, sir.

Claudio. I thank you for the bidding,
I've need of more good morrows.

Lodovico. Nay, your cause
As I have heard is clearly on your side,
Your present liberty proves this, methinks.

Alphonso. Aye, doubtless; trust me all things will be well.
Hear you of Raffaelle, the new Count Cimaro,
The proud and noble heir of dead Antonio?

Claudio. Yes, sir, I know him well, he's truly noble.

Lodovico. We're going to his palace straight; to night
He doth eclipse his own magnificence,
Which ne'er was yet equall'd in Mantua;
His peerless spirit spurns all bounds of custom;
His ample fortune ranges like his will;
A thought with him's a deed.

Claudio. 'Tis a brave gentleman.
(*To the Lawyer*) Lorenzo did not speak with certainty.

Lawyer. Most clearly, sir, and plainly.

Alphonso. You'll be with us
To night at Count Cimaro's.

Claudio. No, sir, truly
My thoughts are now my fitt'st companions;
They leave me little time for gaiety.

Alphonso. I would that I could tempt you to the Count's,
All there are nobly welcome—he has a spirit,
Like Antony, to banquet hosts of kings:
Lodovico. But, since you will not, we must hasten thither,—
I'm grieved at your anxieties.
Alphonso. And I;
But we must hasten to the festival.
Claudio. I thank you,
Your kind concern much moves me, my dear friends,
But let me not detain you from your mirth:
Farewell.
Both. Farewell.
(Exeunt Lod. and Alph.)
Claudio. Such are the herd of men; 'tis not ourselves
That are the objects of their vulgar friendship,
The very outside dress gains more affection
From them. The bubble fortune is their idol.
But come, sir, for I fear I weary you:
In grief we're scorpion-like, and writhing, turn
Our venom 'gainst ourselves—
I'll strive to be more cheerful, and to wean
My thoughts from melancholy—will you please
Come tow'rd my house.
Lawyer. I wait upon you, sir.
(Exeunt.)

SCENE II. THE GARDEN OF CIMARO'S PALACE BY MOONLIGHT.

A retired walk with a Grotto, in the distance illuminated temples, and every appearance of festivity—music without.

Enter Louisa and Maria.

Louisa. This is a scene more suited to my soul
Than the dull glare of yon gay festival:
Aye—it is true that music has a soul,
And needs responsive feeling to be sweet.
To me the melancholy mournful bird,
That pours her pensive plaint in this recess,
Is more harmonious in her soft lament
Than the full chorus in yon glittering hall.
It was not well to seek for Claudio here;
With him, alas, mirth dwells not—'twas a fault
To think he could be here.

Maria. Nay, my dear lady,
I wonder he should fail to seek you.

Louisa. Oh! in his nature dwells so deep a sense
Of truth and honour, he would scorn to seek
My love—were't possible to think him guilty,
And were he so,—I fear I yet should love him:
He cannot doubt, should all the world condemn him,
His name would live fair as this holy light
In my affection.

Maria. And yet you have never
Assured him of it.

Louisa. Oh! a thousand times
By praising, loving, all he prais'd and lov'd—
By timorous glances, check'd with many a blush,
By the sigh half suppress'd, the fault'ring tongue,
The mute embarassed silence;—are not these—
Not love's assurances—but love itself?

Enter Raffaelle habited as a Magician and masked.

Raffaelle. I have amaz'd yon idle thoughtless crowd:
Another sight like this would buy their voices,
To make me duke—if they dar'd think so bravely.
I do despise them, though I court their smile;
And yet 'tis well, my state requires their homage,
The homage that the fool or needy knave
Pays to the man who knows to use his wealth,—
Ha! who is this? she whom I mark'd just now,
Whose simple graces even fools appeared
To gaze on longer than on jewell'd dames,
And that's a wonder: she is somewhat sad;
I'll try a masking humour to revive her.
(To her) I have been weaving spells in yonder halls,
Calling thin sprites from forth the glassy deep,
Decking with instant flow'rs the barren ground,
And filling all the air with sweets ambrosial,
So potent and so perfect was my art;

But here a milder and more holy spell
Controls my powers and bids me kneel your subject.

Louisa. I have no spell save what my fancy gives
To this inspired scene, and that's too pure
For fulsome adulation or the homage
Of one—the lord of yon festivity.

Raffaelle. O'er me a woman and a beauteous one
Possesses all the pow'r of strongest spells
In one soft charm, the potency of love.

Louisa. A charm indeed, like others but ideal.

Raffaelle. My friends will scarce believe this doctrine now;
But why prefer this sad and lonely shade
To mirth and joy and social gaiety?
Those beauties sure were formed for other gaze
Than purblind night, or the unconscious moon;
And to those ears the gentle tale of love
Should sound more grateful than the owl's dull hoot;
And that warm heart should beat with quicker pulse,
More vivid soul should dart from those bright eyes
Than scenes of weary solitude inspire.

Louisa. Alas! sir, I can scarcely answer you
In strains so courtly—I can gain no pleasure
From a fool's smile,—nor can the tale of love,
That's but a tale, spoken, but never felt,

Give me delight—nor joys of courtly life,
That tedious labour after sweets ne'er found,
Repay me for the loss of gentler thoughts.

Raffaelle. Tis well indeed, my sylvan deity,
And lest your wit should change my nature too,
And wrap me here in rural contemplation,
Let me conduct you to my magic kingdom,
And entertain you in my proud domain,
With pomp that may outshine simplicity,
Not in your thoughts,—nor e'en perchance in mine,
But far indeed in theirs who wait my presence,
To pamper to satiety their love
Of wond'rous novelty—will't please you walk?

(Exeunt.)

ACT II.

SCENE I.—AN APARTMENT IN CIMARO'S PALACE.

Enter Raffaelle and Servants.

Raffaelle. Who waits this morning?
Servant. Signior Lodovico
Attends you, sir, and other gentlemen
Are in the hall.
Raffaelle. I'll see them; (*Exit Servant.*)
They are industrious; my last night's feast
Would weary stronger natures:—I am sick
Of this dull round:—that fair one whom I saw
Would give new zest unto my luxuries,
Quicken the lazy current of my blood,
And rouse my soul to energetic action.
I cannot live in apathy, and crawl
Unheeded and unknown; this vaulting spirit
Fate never form'd to animate a worm.

Enter Lodovico and Gentlemen.

Good morrow, friends.
Lodovico. We rise to greet you, sir,
And pay the tribute of our wond'ring homage

To the artificer of last night's glories.

Raffaelle. Nay, my dear friend,—

1 *Gent.* No ducal pageant more
Shall ever hold regard in Mantua.

Raffaelle. You're pleasant, sir.

2 *Gent.* 'Tis far short of the truth:
Nature was shamed with art's magnificence.

Raffaelle. Nay, pray you—

Lodovico. And the lady de Commenes
Grac'd well the hand of Mantua's prime lord.

Raffaelle. The lady de Commenes—I knew her not—

Lodovico. The beauteous lady honor'd by your favour:

Raffaelle. This is worth hearing;— she has beauty truly.

1 *Gent.* Mantua waits but your award to say so.

Raffaelle. Her wealth and influence are great in Mantua.

Lodovico. Next to my lord's.

Raffaelle. Her wit is well enough.

Lodovico. 'Tis counted rare.

Raffaelle. And I suppose—to end
This list of her perfections—she has suitors,
A regiment or so.

Lodovico. They are not few, sir,
Alphonso— and the noble Claudio—
He indeed is most favoured.

Raffaelle. Claudio!
My friend whose life's in danger; is't not he?
Lodovico. The same, my lord.
Raffaelle, He's worthy of her hand;
And when the world gives out too that she loves him,
Perchance, tho' she ne'er thought of it before,
It may be that she'll marry him; — how think you?
Lodovico. To-day, I guess, my lord—will prove the truth.
Raffaelle. To-day?
Lodovico. His cause to day the duke will judge;
At noon the court will meet.
Raffaelle. I will attend it:
Faith I should feel an interest in their union;
'Tis very soon, yet 'twill be time enough.
(Aside.)
How stands he, think you?
Lodovico. By the evidence
Of lord Lorenzo he will sure be cleared.
Raffaelle. (*Aside*) Not if a dagger's found in Mantua:
Waits Julio there?
Servant. He does, my lord.
Raffaelle. 'Tis well;
Perchance I may have need of him directly
On urgent business. Then Lorenzo saw

Vincentio attack him?

Lodovico. So he says, sir,

Raffaelle. I'm glad his life rests on so sure a cause;
I would I were his judge; and yet I doubt not
The duke will deal as nobly by him as I should:
I would do much to serve him in his suit,
Knew I the means—there was no other witness,
Save this Lorenzo?

Lodovico. None, my lord.

Raffaelle. Nor needs there;
I think that is his villa near the road,
Where this encounter happened.

Lodovico. Aye, my lord,—

Raffaelle. It is a sweet retreat, and were it mine
I should prefer it to the city—he,
I think, is seldom from it?

Lodovico. Very rarely;
To-day he comes here to attend the trial.

Raffaelle. 'Tis fortunate indeed, he is the witness:
My friends, now I bethink me I have need
Of a few minutes leisure, you will walk
Into my gardens; last night's sports are gone;
But there is yet some poor amusement for you:
Open the doors there.

(*Folding doors are opened in the back ground and discover a natural and beautiful garden with rural seats, &c.*)

Lodovico. The pageant's gone :

1 *Gent.* 'Tis wonder upon wonder !

Raffaelle. Nay, nay, a trifle : I'd not have the ruin

Of a fool's sport remain to mock my poverty
When 'tis gone by a year; nay, pray you walk,
I conjure not by day-light.

(*They go out very obsequiously, and with much wonder on their countenances.*)

Louisa de Commenes ! the vaunt of Mantua !
The pride of Italy ! she 's not for Claudio—
Lorenzo shall not save him,—Julio !

Enter Julio.

Her wealth, her influence, 'bove all her beauty,
Should grace no less than Raffaelle Cimaro—
Curs are no mates for lions : Claudio !
Beware my greater nature ! little men
Are but the cyphers that make up my sum
Of power and greatness. Julio !

Julio. My lord :

Raffaelle. A beggar feed upon such royal cates !

Julio, ere noon I must have one dispatch'd ;
Lorenzo—on his evidence depends
The safety of my dear friend Claudio ;

And I would find some fearless evidence
To swear that Claudio attacked Vincentio,
And speak of other matters, which kind fortune
Has giv'n me knowledge of. I saw Vincentio
At lord Alphonso's on the very day,
Where he conceal'd himself, and from that somewhat.—
The needy monk I yesterday relieved
Seek and bring to me. Hold! I must begone
To the lady de Commenes—within a half-hour
Call with him at her palace; but beware
She sees him not. Here's money for the hand
That takes Lorenzo's life—about it straight.
Stay—if thou find'st another that may serve
To fix his death on Claudio—bring him to me—
Lorenzo will be passing from his palace—
(*Exit Julio.*)
She must be mine; with her I should outstep
The ducal pomp; I'd pass on pleasure's wing
The wildest flights of fancy; to my will
All nature should be chain'd: methinks already
I swell with the intoxicating thought.
Come, for the means.—Oh! this indeed is power
In its full use—to pile, and pile,—and heap,
Till the proud temple, rising to the clouds,
Leaves e'en the artificer in joyous wonder.
I see—I see—ha! ha! when I have doted
Awhile in waking dreams on the idea
I'll rise and form it to reality. (*Exit.*)

SCENE II.—AN APARTMENT IN THE PALACE DE COMMENES.

Enter Louisa and Maria.

Louisa. 'Tis near the time, Maria.
Maria. It is, lady,
Louisa. Oh this suspence! this tedious chasm of being,
That so destroys our present faculties,
And wraps them in the future.—
This feast of yesternight was brighter far
Than aught within my memory.
Maria. Aye, madam,
So noble and so brave a company,
The music and the glorious temple.—
Louisa. Peace!
I think there is no doubt of Claudio's safety;
Why dost not answer me? there can be none.
Maria. I hope not, madam, nay, I'm sure there is none.
Louisa. That's a kind word. Even flattery sometimes
Is dear to us, although we know it is so,
And yet, I trust, in this 'tis but the truth.

Enter a Servant.

Servant. Madam, the count Cimaro.
Louisa. I am sick,
I'll not be spoken with; yet stay, I know not,

His countenance were great to save my Claudio,
I wait his pleasure. *(Ex. Servant)* He should
be right noble,
And fond of such a spirit as my Claudio.

Enter Raffaelle.

Raffaelle. A fair good morrow to you, gentle
lady;
Your beauties do not fly the sun's quick beam,
But shew like flowers, that, wond'rous as I
thought them,
But droop by night—and meet the brighter day
With tenfold fairness.

Louisa. You are jocund still, sir.

Raffaelle. Sadness dwelt not in Paradise—
and here,
Eden's restored to me—beneath that smile
Grief can no more exist than pow'rs of evil
Within the light celestial.

Louisa. You prove your wit, lord Raffaelle,
not your truth.

Raffaelle. Nay, that can never be, if saws
be true,
A lover's heart feels deeply, and his tongue
Gives utterance to matter, more than words.

Louisa. Your mirth's your love, Cimaro.

Raffaelle. Not so, lady,
Albeit I am not of that whining tribe,
Who, having no other fortune than their words,
Mete them out dolefully to a nasal tune,

And strangle joy in their contorted faces.
Lady, we both are revelling in the morn
Of fair and sportive youth; on both of us
Fortune has shed abundance; in our grasp
Lie all 'neath sov'reign honours; we are plac'd
So far above the underlings o' the world,
Common events to us may be disport,
And while the tide of fortune sweeps down fools,
We stand the barriers of the puny flood,
And overpeer its rage.

Louisa. Life's accidents,
If they harm not ourselves, may yet have power
Upon our friends; and in their fate we feel
The ills of being.

Raffaelle. Why should we then link
Our greatness to their frailty? nature shews
In this, we should be faithful to ourselves.
He who would save a drowning friend from death
May topple headlong in, and die himself.
Great minds with great should join—and wealth
with wealth—
And pow'r with pow'r—and all things with
their equals.
In this, I still am speaking 'gainst myself;
For you, being peerless, never could be mine.
You smile, dear lady, might I hope that smile
Assur'd me favour in my bold attempt,
I should then dare to say, that all unworthy,
And poor, as I may seem, compared with you—

Though those bright beauties, resting in these arms,
Would shew as brilliant as the lustrous moon,
On the deep vested bosom of still night—
Though none can equal that all heav'nly sweetness,
Second to none beneath yourself;—in Mantua,
The richest, and most potent, as I am,
I lay my love most humbly at your feet,
And wait in hope your soft and gentle kindness
To place it in your heart, to rest for aye.

Louisa. Good words, well put together, lord Cimaro.

Raffaelle. Say—a good meaning from an open heart;
But will you deign an answer to them, lady?

Louisa. I've not the wit to jest, as you have done—

Raffaelle. But to be serious as I have been.

Louisa. Oh! that were to say nothing.

Raffaelle. Trust me, lady,
I've said no more than my full heart has prompted;
And ask from you a like sincerity.

Louisa. Then, not to wrong your openness, beseech you
Believe at once that I can ne'er be your's;
And from all further suit—I do entreat
You will refrain.

Raffaelle. This is a lady's "nay,"
And therefore I am bound to disbelieve it.

Louisa. My lord Cimaro, 'tis no idle thought
Makes me refuse you, if you love me truly
You'll speak no more of this.

Raffaelle. (*Aside.*) Is't so, 'tis well,
Ha!—ha! — I'll try: —I would not, trust me, lady,
Urge you beyond the deep respect I owe you;
Yet, for your honour, may I tell you this,
Injurious as I doubt not you will deem it,
'Tis said you will espouse the felon Claudio.
(*She endeavours to speak.*)
O! trust me—I could not give ear to it
Beyond the observance of a smile—I see—
I knew it must be false.—

Louisa. No more, I pray you.—

Raffalle. Nay, I, perchance, should not have spoken of it,
But feeling a deep interest here to serve you,
I would not that the slightest taint should rest
One moment on your fame; and though I scorn'd
Even to repel the foolish calumny.—

Louisa. My lord Cimaro!

Raffaelle. I would pursue the sland'rer to the death,
If you but wish it:—'twas a sacrilege
To join that spotless name with such reproach.

Louisa. And why reproach? Cimaro.
(Hesitatingly)

Raffaelle. *(Aside.)* Yes, she loves him:
Claudio thou diest: heav'n has no pow'r to save thee.
Oh! t'was the very madness of their malice
To link imperial blood with a murderer's.

Louisa. A murderer's!—he is no murderer.

Raffaelle. Nay, I know not—the duke will be his judge—
No more of him—let us to sprightlier subjects.

Louisa. I pray you pardon me—I am not well.

Raffaelle. I'm sorry that I mentioned this report,
But I am guiltless of belief in it.

Louisa. Leave me, I pray you.

Enter a Servant.

Servant. My lord, you are enquired for.

Raffaelle. 'Tis well:
Madam I'll leave you—trust me I am grieved—
Much grieved I spoke of it — farewell — farewell—
This scene will change 'ere night—'tis done—he's dead. *(Aside.)*
As I return from court I'll wait on you:
He's not the first kill'd by a woman's kindness.
(Aside.) *(Exit.)*

Louisa. Come, come, Maria; come, my gentle girl,
Lead me into my chamber—Oh! my heart
It leaps into my throat, cruel Cimaro!
Love him! oh Claudio!

(*Exeunt.*)

ACT III.

SCENE 1.—A HALL OF JUSTICE IN THE DUCAL PALACE.

Enter on one side Claudio with Officers, &c. and Venilla on the other, in mourning, and attended by Gentlemen.

Venilla. My lord, I'm happy to encounter you
Before I range myself as your accuser:
I would not you should think me of a spirit
Basely litigious, that would make this court
The arbiter where honour should decide,
And bear sole sway: still less should I desire
To prosecute vexatiously my appeal,
When you, had my lost kinsman been alive,
Would stand most justly here as the appellant:
But, as it is, beseech you, sir, to think
This course is but pursued to clear your fame,
And so remove all taint upon my love
Due to my kinsman dead.

Claudio. I thank you, sir,
And trust that in the end I may shew worthy
Of so much favor in your thought.

Enter Raffaelle and Julio.

Raffaelle. They understood me right?

Julio. Doubt not, my lord.

Raffaelle. Tell them to herd among the common rabble:
Be not you seen too near them; when they're sworn,
Let them go instant to my house. Lord Claudio,
Good-day; I'm glad to find the time so near,
For your deliverance: my lord Venilla,
I think you doubt not of his innocence—
This scarcely need be heard before the duke.

Claudio. I thank you, lord Cimaro, for your kindness,
But as I dread no malice, I would rather
This trial should proceed; to crush it now
Would favour rumour, not alone 'gainst me,
But my good lord Venilla.

Raffaelle. It may be;
And truly 'twill be better since you doubt not
A fortunate result. The duke is coming,
And with him all the nobles.

Enter Duke and Senators, they take their seats.

Duke. Before we enter on the present business
For which we are assembled, as an earnest
Of our high favour to the lord Cimaro
We do invest him with the sword of state,
To bear it as our marshal in our city.

Raffaelle. My lord, I humbly thank your grace; my service,
Poor as it is—is freely yours; my zeal
Shall strive to merit that your bounty now
Has cast on me untried.

Duke. 'Tis well, my lord;
Now to your suit—proclaim the court begun—

Crier. I do hereby cite the lord Venilla, the accuser in this case, to come forward and prove his charge registered in this court against the lord Claudio. Long live the Duke!

Venilla. My lord, I will not tire with idle words
The patience of this most august assembly:
I stand here to accuse lord Claudio
That he hath slain Vincentio, my kinsman;
And crave your highness' hearing in this cause
Rather for him than for myself; for I
Will, with your pleasure, wait his open answer;
First stating that which he hath not denied,
That by his hand the dead Vincentio fell.
If without reason, of a brutish rage,
This deed hath been committed,—then I crave
The vengeance of the law upon his head.
That by lord Claudio's hand my kinsman died
Needs no more proof than this, that he was found
Standing beside the dead Vincentio's corpse,
And his drawn rapier reeking in his blood;
If he deny not this, let him reply,

What cause he had to kill him: on his answer
Prov'd by what witness he may call before you
My subsequent proceeding will depend.

Duke. Claudio! your answer to Venilla's charge.

Claudio. First then, my lord, to save the court some time,
I do confess by me Vincentio fell,
And grieved I am at the occasion, yet
To save myself this means alone remained.
For on my life the attack was made by him;
Lorenzo saw the onset, and I trust
Is here to prove the truth of what I speak.

Duke. Is lord Lorenzo here?

Raffaelle. My lord, he is not,
He may be waiting in the galleries—
Let him be called.

(Exit Attendant.)

Duke. Are any others here
That can bear witness upon this occasion.

A Monk steps forward.

Raffaelle. Did you expect this evidence, lord Claudio?

Claudio. No, my good lord,

Raffaelle. I thought you knew him not.

Duke. *(To the Monk.)* Who art thou?

Monk. Good my lord, of holy order:
Paolo is my name; a Dominican.
First may I ask— was't near my lord Lorenzo's

The fray took place?

Duke. It was; know'st thou of it?

Monk. Near there, my lord, upon that fatal day,
Chancing to walk in solitary thought,
I saw this nobleman, with hurried step,
Pacing behind the ruin's broken wall;
Ever he rubb'd with trembling hand his brow
That seem'd all pale and moist with agitation.
At last I heard the sound of other feet;
He rush'd half madly forth—I saw no more.

Claudio. How!

Raffaelle. Peace, lord Claudio!—the duke would speak.

Duke. Follow'd you not?—how was't you saw no more?

Monk. Alas! my lord, I am an aged man,
Bent down with years, and fearful in my nature;
He that would lay in ambush for a foe,
Might murder me.

Claudio. I murder thee!

Raffaelle. (*Half-aside.*) I would beseech you, my lord Claudio, peace:
You know not the emotion you betray.

Claudio. Can I hear this—and yet remain unmoved?
Thou liest, old man.

Raffaelle. (*To the Monk.*) Have you aught more to say?

Monk. I have no more—and that I have spoken truly
Methinks these years should witness: I have nought
To hope for in this world: look, good my lord,
And judge by him if I speak not the trhth.
Raffaelle. (*To Claudio.*) I feared this from your rashuess—be more calm—
Has your grace aught to ask of this man more?
Duke. Not now— let him stand by awhile.
Raffaelle. Yet stay,
Lord Claudio, would you I should try his truth—
Or were it best to hear no more from him?
Claudio. I have no cause to fear, my lord Cimaro,
In shewing all the truth.
Raffaelle. Then I've one question—
In what dress was lord Claudio habited?
Monk. He wore a large dark mantle which fell from him
As he leapt out the gap.
Venilla. There was one found.
Monk. And as he drew aside his vest there beamed,
In the moon's gentle ray—that fell upon it,
A ruby bright and large — hung round his neck
By a thin chain of gold.

Duke. Is't so indeed?
Sure that bright jewel, matchless in Mantua,
Which was found near, and which had once belonged
To the noble lady de Commenes was this.

Raffaelle. I thought that this would work. (*Aside*) Lord Claudio:
I know not what to say—ask somewhat of him
That may dispel this fearful mystery.

Duke. Lord Claudio, would you more with him?

Claudio. My lord,
I do disdain to question him—to all
I do oppose Lorenzo's testimony:
Would he were here: my advocate was sent
To seek for him.

Raffaelle. (*Aside*) If found he could not help you:
Are there no others that can speak of this?
I hope there may, to prove this old man's malice;
And yet I know not what could tempt him to't.

A Peasant steps forward.

Duke. Come you to speak of this?

Peasant. So please your highness,
Going from Mantua homeward on that day,
Two passed me on the road; and one was muffled
In a black cloak: as they walk'd by, the other

Said to him—"Two might do the business surer:"
The one replied—"But you have no disguise,
And, should Vincentio 'scape, that might be fatal."
More I heard not, for they went on full quickly,
And I'd a heavy burden.

Duke. Look around you,
If any be of the same height with him
You saw thus muffled.

Peasant. 'Twas about the height
Of yonder nobleman. (*Pointing to Claudio.*)

Raffaelle. Art sure of that?
Quite sure?

Peasant. I am, my lord.

Raffaelle. It cannot be:
Were you, lord Claudio, thus habited?
Who saw you on that day can prove you were not?

Claudio. I was so dressed.

Raffaelle. Yet there walked no one with you?

Claudio. There was one;
But for the rest I know but that 'tis false.

Duke. Who was the other?

Claudio. 'Twas the lord Lorenzo,
Who left me near his villa.

Duke. Whither went you?

Claudio. Towards the villa of the lady Commenes. (*With Hesitation*)

Duke. Your answer is confused: I fear Lorenzo
Comes not lest he should witness too against you,
Or else be prov'd accomplice in this guilt:
Would you ask more of him?

Claudio. My gracious lord,
I am amazed at this evidence;
'Tis all a tissue of malicious falsehood;
I know not who has moved them thus against me.

Raffaelle. *(Aside)* He gasps within the eddy of a whirlpool,
And his last struggles draw him to the gulph.
Yes, he himself shall minister his fate.
(To Claudio) Yet, my lord Claudio, you have one hope—
If this arise from malice, I'll disprove it:
Let all the witnesses be taken hence.

(Exeunt Attendants with Witnesses.)

My lord Alphonso, as I think, Vincentio
Was with you here in Mantua privately,
Upon some feigned business, a short time
Before he made th' attempt on Claudio's life.

Alphonso. He was, my lord, and from his secrecy
Yourself and I alone could know of it.
He passed forth disguised as a monk,
And changed his habit at a little cottage,
About a mile from Mantua.

Raffaelle. 'Tis well;
If there be any malice in their proof
They will convict themselves: 'tis plain he went
From Mantua thither; should the peasant swear
He saw him undisguised, and near to Mantua;
Or should they err, led by the gen'ral rumour,
To think that he was coming from his villa.

Claudio. I see it, good my lord, and thank you much.

Duke. Call in the peasant.

Enter Attendants with Peasant.

How far was't from Mantua
Lord Claudio pass'd you?

Peasant. As I think, my lord,
'Twas half a mile.

Duke. Saw you Vincentio after?

Peasant. No, my lord, I saw none save an old monk.

Duke. At what time did he pass you?

Peasant. 'Twas at sun-set.

Duke. Thence 'tis about two miles to where he fell.
Let them bring in the monk.

Enter Attendants with Monk.

Whence came the sounds
Of footsteps—from the side of Mantua
Or from the villa of the lady Commenes?

Monk. From that of Mantua, my lord, which seem'd
Most strange to me, when I heard more of this:
Twas said Vincentio was at his villa,
Bnt this way I am sure I heard his footsteps.
Duke. Aye,
At what time was't you saw the stranger rush
From forth the ruin?
Monk. Somewhat past an hour
After the sun had set.
Claudio. I know not how—
This tale hangs well together, but 'tis false.
Duke. My lord, the evidence is mighty 'gainst you,
Unless you can excuse, or shew most clearly
'Twas in your own defence you did this deed,
I have no power to turn the rigorous law
From the dread doom of death.
Claudio. My lord, I am o'erwhelm'd—I cannot speak
More than—'tis false. (*To the Monk*) Old man, thy life is short,
And heaven will require a strict account
Of such blaspheming of thy holy office.
Duke. Exclaims are vain, unless thou hast some proof,
Or cause to urge to mitigate the law,
Thy life is forfeit.

Raffaelle. My gracious prince—if Claudio hath done this,
As it appears, some reason of strong weight
Urged him to such a deed: I cannot think
Without some deep and heart-felt injury
He would assassinate Vincentio.
Speak, my lord Claudio—confess the truth,
That justice may with mercy be attempered,
Leave not thy name an infamy to man,
For causeless murder. Speak, and shew thy wrongs,
It nought avails to combat this strong proof.
Claudio. No—I have said—some deadly unseen foe
That dares not bear his cause upon his sword,
Has prompted these to lie against my life.
I will not compromise my innocence:
They that have sworn this know that it is false.
Duke. I grieve thy fate, but know not how to avoid it:
Had I the power I would spare thee yet.
(Consults with Senators.)
Raffaelle. *(Aside.)* Now triumph, Claudio, in thy lady's love!
The hands that should have clasp'd about thy neck,
May now weave chaplets for thy timeless grave;
Thy hymeneal song shall be a dirge;
Thy nuptial bed—the cold and lifeless tomb:

Whilst I shall revel in thy mistress' beauties,
And quaff nectareous sweets from her soft lip,
As the dull grave-worm draws itself o'er thine,
My heart shall beat with ecstacy of joy
As thine shall throb the last of agony.
(*To him*) Oh! Claudio! dote not on the name
of innocence;
Confess, and boldly trust the duke with all:
Thy state is at the worst—a milder sentence
May greet repentant sorrow. (*Claudio looks firm but distressed.*)
(*Aside.*) What! does this sting, lord Claudio? This is he
Who would wed her I love.

Duke. There is no hope—
No power in the law—that can defer
Your instant execution.

Raffaelle. (*Aside.*) There is no hope!
My dear friend, Claudio! (*Aside*) That such a thing
Should be Cimaro's rival!

Enter an Officer.

Officer. The lord Lorenzo, faint and wounded, waits
For entrance to the court.

Duke. Lorenzo wounded!
Let him come in at once—conduct him hither.

Raffaelle. Curse on the fool that let him 'scape. (*Aside*) Make way there.

Now my dear lord—I trust your honour's saved.
(*to Claudio.*)

Enter Lorenzo supported.

Fool that I was to trust a common stabber!—
So the man dies they think they've done enough—
(*to Lorenzo,*) My lord, sit down, your wounds are painful to you (*Seats him in the Marshal's chair.*)

Duke. Tell to the court how this befel, Lorenzo.

Lorenzo. Pardon, my Lord, I'm faint with loss of blood—
I scarce can speak, for, passing from my villa,
Near to the spot where Claudio slew Vincentio,
A ruffian blow left me for dead, 'till one
Pass'd by and bound my wound—at my desire
Procured conveyance hither—

Duke. This is strange
And looks indeed like malice against Claudio.
My lord Cimaro, cause fit search be made
To bring the villain to just punishment;
For by his means we may discover more.

Lorenzo. I saw him not—I fell by his first blow.

Raaffelle. My lord I'll institute immediate quest,
If these things are permitted, there's no safety
For honest men in Mantua—I'll look to it.

Duke. But what says lord Lorenzo?—
Lorenzo. Good my lord,
Upon the day—Oh I am faint!
Raffaelle. He'll die;
Would 't were before he could clear Claudio!
Duke. Rest for awhile.
Lorenzo. My lord I yet have breath,
And while I yet can speak—I will attest
The innocence of Claudio—
Duke. Thank Heaven
Lorenzo. I parted with him near the abbey walls
I tow'rd my villa, he tow'rd Commenes,
When turning to observe the rising moon,
Which shone full brightly o'er the mouldering arches,
I saw Vincentio rush from forth the ruin
And aim a deadly blow at Claudio;
His sword pierc'd but the mantle of my friend,
Who instant drew—and, ere I gain'd the spot,
Had kill'd him—at the moment that I reach'd him,
A Peasant too came up, who had not seen
More than Vincentio's fall—I would be spared,
For life ebbs with me—
Duke. 'Tis enough, Lorenzo.
Where are the Monk and Peasant?
Raffaelle. Gone, my lord,—
I see them not—.

Duke. Let search be made for them:
Meanwhile lord Claudio—you are free—and trust me,
I am most thankful heav'n hath interfered
To spare to me the sin of too rash judgment;
Fearful indeed, is the dread task of rulers,
Had not Lorenzo sped thus to your aid,
I should have sent you to that fatal doom,
Which all my sorrows could not have recall'd.
Lord marshal see that search be made for all
Who have abetted in this traiterous plot,
And they shall feel the vengeance of the law.

Raffaelle. Doubt not, my lord, with joy I undertake
The task of vengeance on lord Claudio's foes.
(Aside) For were't another's office 'twere my death.

Duke. Break up the Court. (*Exeunt Duke Senators, &c.*)

Raffaelle. Pardon, my dear lord Claudio,
That I have been so tardy in the offering
Of my congratulations—but my joy,
At your deliverance, was too full for speech,
You know, I trust, my friendship.

Claudio. Aye, my lord—
I have not in my safety aught more pleasing
Than is the power to return my thanks t'ye

Raffaelle. I fear'd indeed I had been too officious

But you will pardon it.

Claudio. I knew your meaning,
And therefore could not but be thankful for't.

Raffaelle. That would be strange if you had known my meaning.—*(Aside)*
I must begone to order instant search
For these false witnesses—I will not fail
To see you shortly, and I trust to bring them
Within your power—so I'll take my leave.
Farewell—damn'd—damn'd—damn'd chance—but I've not done. *(Aside)* *(Exit.)*

Lodovico. That's a brave spirit—he's a true friend, Claudio!
But that their cunning was past human wisdom
He would have sure discovered it—as 'tis.
You are indebted to him for the attempt.

Claudio. I think so, sir:
Come lords, we'll to my house, my cheer's the better
For so much peril, will you with me homeward?

(Exeunt)

SCENE II.—A ROOM IN CIMARO'S PALACE.

Enter Raffaelle and Julio

Raffaelle. Tell me no more, he should have stabb'd and stabb'd
Till all his body were a wound—that, had
Each separate inch a life, he might die all,

Henceforth I'll trust myself—the monk and peasant
Conceal most closely: I must search for them;
Convey this gold to them—they've done their work.
Curse on the wayward fate that crosses me:
All causes should conspire to form great ends:
If I o'erleap the petty bound of justice,
And doom the reptile Claudio to his ruin,
What is the speck in the majestic world?
A thing that was—and is beheld no more.
It is all nature's custom, that the great
Consume the small. Who views the cataract
With less of thought sublime, because it drives
Some little brook back to its puny source?
'Tis greater by its devastating power.
Should one small cloud
Dim the fair lustre of heaven's varied arch?
Should the proud oak be rooted from the earth
Because its growth displaces some dull weed?
Claudio, my genius hath the mastery,
And thine shall bow to it: this arm shall do it—
I'll make occasion speedily; and if
I fail, 'tis but to bid him to a banquet,
And poison him in feasting.

(*Enter Servant*)

Servant. Lord Alphonso
Waits you without, sir.

Raffaelle. He may serve my purpose,

For should I need the festal cup, his hand
Shall be the bearer. I await him here,
(*Exit Servant.*
He too was Claudio's rival, and suspicion
Were better upon him than me: let's see now—
To bid this Claudio to a feast to-morrow,
And on the way assault him.
(*Enter Alphonso.*)
Oh! my friend,
I wish'd to see you.

Alphonso. Oh! my lord, command me.

Raffaelle. I have been thinking how to celebrate
The noble Claudio's deliverance,
And I design a feast to-morrow night.

Alphonso. To-morrow he is married.

Raffaelle. Married! married!
To-morrow!—and to whom?

Alphonso. The lady Commenes.

Raffaelle. Indeed!

Alphonso. Most true.

Raffaelle. This is no little matter:
I think it is as near to you as me;
We both have lov'd the lady de Commenes;
And both, as I should guess, were griev'd to lose her.

Alphonso. Faith, somewhat.

Raffaelle. Had not Claudio been her suitor,
One or the other had had better fortune.

Alphonso. I am content to yield.
Raffaelle. (*Aside*) 'Twere easier
To move a wren to combat with an eagle,
Than urge this dolt to touch a hair of Claudio.
(*To him*) Well, well, and so am I; a lady's love
Cannot obey aught but her fantasy.
I've an esteem for Claudio, and I've shewn it.
I freely give Louisa to his love;
And more to prove how well it pleases me,
I will not be denied his presence here
To-morrow night you shall go bid him for me.
Alphonso. Most happily, my lord.
Raffaelle. And to the lady,
Who doubtless will not be so easily won,
Say this—I spoke to her the other day
To prove her love to Claudio, not meaning
Any offence by it, but if she lov'd him
To yield at once; and that I meant no wrong,
Methinks my conduct at the trial proves;
Were my heart rancorous 'gainst Claudio,
I should not thus have sought to save him.
Alphonso. Aye, sir,
Doubt not I'll urge this.
Raffaelle. Something further, in which
I'll crave your kind assistance: some of us,
You and myself, will, habited as peasants,
Conduct the festival, and humbly shew
The changes of the eve.
Alphonso. With all my heart;

I will engage some other noblemen
To wear the habit, and attend your guests.

Raffaelle. May I entreat you then to see them now,
I will not fail t' eclipse what yet I've done,
In honour of so happy an event:
Farewell.

Alphonso. I will about it: farewell, sir.
(*Exit.*)

Raffaelle. So, so—his nature formed him for a lacquey:
He'll act it to the life:—to lose a lady,
And such a lady, with a less concern
Than monks bestow their scapularies: aye,
This gen'ral habit will much aid my plan—
It will divide suspicion, and I'll fix it—
First at my rapier's point I will essay him
In the dark portico beside my palace;
There will I have my servant Julio
Meet and detain him;—no delay—such deeds
Are better in the doing than the thought.
I'll bring her yet a virgin to my bed,
And crop the prime of love in her sweet beauties.
This marriage yet shall be a funeral.
Fate, like a mettled steed, has started 'neath me,
Only to prove the prowess of the rider;
But I will curb and spur it to my will,
And ride triumphant to the goal of bliss.
Security has lost more fools than Claudio.

I'll spare no pomp to greet his death; the glitter
Will take th' attention of the common herd,
And keep them from too deep a scrutiny;—
This hand shall make sure work—'tis prompted here. (*Exit.*)

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A ROOM IN THE PALACE OF COMMENES.

Enter Claudio and Louisa,

Claudio. We owe much thanks to our friend Cimaro,
For honouring thus our nuptials.
Louisa. Think you so?
If so, his mind is chang'd tow'rd you and me.
Claudio. I think as lord Alphonso spoke of him,
That, finding he must never hope your hand,
With a true generous spirit, and to serve you
In aiding me, he came unto my trial.
If I am skill'd in him—he's of that nature
To gain an end he'd put forth all his means;
Yet the end lost he envies not the winner.
His pleasure is in the pursuit not gain.
There are some men whose happiness is action—

To whom repose is torture—who hold nought
Indifferent to them;—such a man is Raffaelle.

Louisa. I'm grieved your friend Lorenzo lingers yet
In pain and sickness; but the wound's not mortal.

Claudio. No, thanks to heaven, their malice there has failed;
We'll to Cimaro's, love; I would not spurn
His noble friendship; yet I would not go:
I am to-day too full of quilet joys
To love a boisterous tumult; methinks joy
Dwells but in peace,—and such sweet solitude
As the first pair in loveliest Eden knew;
Such friends have yet a claim on our affections,
Which 'twere a dotage to despise.

Enter a Servant.

Servant. My lord,
Some gentlemen are waiting to conduct you
To lord Cimaro's.

Claudio. We'll attend them straight:
Come, my Louisa.—

(*Exeunt.*)

SCENE II. —A DARK PORTICO BY RAFFAELLE'S PALACE.

In the half distance, an illuminated Hall, music within.

Enter Raffaelle cloak'd and mask'd.

Raffaelle. 'Tis strange—a few short moments, and he dies!
He that in pride of youth and happiness,
Plumed up by beauty's smile, and trick'd in all
The trappings of his new aspiring fortunes:
He that would mate me in magnificence,
Comes but adorned with all these shining glories
As to a sacrifice; dull and unconscious
As one who sleeps beneath a tottering rock,
And dies ere ruin wake him:—I can play
The spider with true art: he is enmesh'd
Ev'n as he gambols, and my fell embrace
Poisons his life-blood:—soft— is't he?—

Enter Julio.

Julio. My lord.
Raffaelle. Peace on thy life, and wait for Claudio's coming.

Enter Lodovico and others: Raffaelle draws back.

Lodovico. All Mantua dotes upon lord Claudio:
His very griefs have made him popular;

And in magnificence I doubt he'll rival
The lord Cimaro, though I hear he to-night
Exceeds his former grandeur.

1 *Gentleman.* Let us in then.

(*Exeunt.*)

Raffaelle. Aye, aye, lord Claudio is their dear friend now,
He whom some two days since they would think grac'd
By half a look, they turn to him and court him;
My pleasures pall and sicken on their tastes:
'Twere folly but to dream it could be else.
Th' astronomer views not th' all-glorious sun,
That immemorial pageant of the heavens,
With half the fond delight with which he spies
The scarce seen twinklings of a new-found star:
Great things grow stale and common by oft seeing;
And, with the common herd, are scarcely felt;
Because the form, instinctive in their thoughts,
Awakes no cause for vulgar contemplation.
Yet I shall mar this pleasure—here he comes!

Raffaelle stands back, Enter Claudio, Louisa and Gentlemen.

Julio comes forward to Claudio.

Julio. My lord, I'd crave a moment's word with you.

Claudio. On then, my love!—on friends! I'll strait be with you.

(*Exeunt Louisa and Gentlemen*)

Julio. My lord, my master charg'd me to inform you,
He thinks to have found some traces of those men
Who bore false witness 'gainst you, at your trial.

Claudio. Then let them go unheeded—I am free
From any wish against them;—should they name
The author of my ills, I would not harm them
Let my lord know this—

Julio. Sir, I'll do your bidding

(*Exit.*)

Raffaelle makes a pass at him as he is going out, which he wards with his hand—they fight—Raffaelle is disarm'd—he exits in the arch.

Claudio. Help! help!—he must be here.

Enter Gentlemen with torches.

A villain ever now attacked me here—
He must have pass'd this way.

1 *Gentleman.* Ha! see this door;
Was't here he fled?

2 *Gentleman.* This leads but to the court,
And no one's there.

Claudio. Indeed this is most strange;
But I beseech you say no more of it,
It might affright Louisa.

1 *Gentleman.* We will not, sir,

Claudio. Thanks! thanks! let's in, lest that my stay amaze them.

(*Exeunt.*)

SCENE III.—A SALOON OPENING BY FOLDING-DOORS INTO AN ILLUMINATED GARDEN, IN WHICH FOUNTAINS ARE SEEN PLAYING, THE VIEW TERMINATED BY A RUSTIC TEMPLE OF SILVER BOUGHS ENTWINED.

Gentlemen and Ladies masked,—Alphonso with others, habited in rich Arcadian dresses discovered—among these Raffaelle, similiarly habited, steals unperceived — a dance—after which Raffaelle comes forward.

Raffaelle. He'as 'scaped the lion's gripe; I'm held at bay;
But I've another effort ere I fall:
Thinks he to baffle my endeavours yet;
I am urged on by millions of desires,
And each desire hath many several hands;
To gain the full completion of my wishes:
Yet on one chance rests all my hopes—one chance!—
If it be lost, I have no care but death:
And both shall grace the glory of my ruin.
I am not fool enough to die alone:
I'll hold immortal int'rest in Louisa—
My spirit shall o'ermatch her Claudio's.

Enter Claudio and Gentlemen.

Claudio. Nay, name it not; would I could find Cimaro,
He might seek out the villain—but no matter;
Do not, I pray you, interrupt the sport,
By speaking of th' attack.

2 *Gentleman.* We will not, sir,

Raffaelle. (*To Alphonso*) Our guests seem somewhat heated by the dance;
Let us fill wine to them—pour out a bowl—
For my lord Claudio.

Claudio. Is it you, Cimaro?
To-morrow I will speak with you, so please you:
The ancient malice of my unknown foe
Is not e'en yet appeas'd.

Raffaelle. (*Aside*) Nor will it be,
Until your life is made the atonement. How
Has he again, attempted on your life?

Claudio. Ev'n here beside your gates I was attack'd
By one, who being disarm'd fled hither.

Raffaelle. Hither!
I'll search the palace.

Claudio. Not so—pray you, Raffaelle;
Louisa must not know this.

(*Alphonso brings wine which Raffaelle takes and puts a powder into it.*)

Raffaelle. (*To Alphonso*) My lord Manlio,

I thank you, will you drink my gentle lord?
(To Claudio.)

Claudio. I'm somewhat heated by this strange encounter.

Raffaelle. *(Laying his hand on Claudio's, which holds the cup.)*
I must prepare the sights in yonder temple.
One word—beware Alphonso!—
(Raffaelle passes to the back ground, and is busied with the crowd—as Claudio raises the cup to his lips, Louisa comes up.)

Claudio. I was about to taste this generous wine—
Will't please you add a sweet to it Louisa?
Your lips do breathe a blessing on the bowl,
And make it sacred to the god of love.
(She sips it—He drinks it.)

Louisa. What was it that detained you, Claudio?

Claudio. 'Twas but some matters that related to
The treachery of my foes, my friend Cimaro
Thinks he has found them—but no more of that—
(Alphonso takes the bowl from Claudio. Claudio and Louisa walk up.)

Raffaelle. *(Viewing the bowl in Alphonso's hand)*
Yes, he has drain'd the venom to the bottom;

His minutes now are measured, strait 'twill work.

Enter Julio.

Julian. (*To Alphonso*) My lord, will you permit me to conduct you
Into the temple—to command the changes
That wait but for your presence—

Alphonso. Lead me thither, (*Exeunt.*)

Raffaelle. Why this is brave—all's suited to my wishes.
This is such joy—that were the fiery bolt
Of vengeance winged already 'gainst my head
I would exult in the short interim—
And it is like I shall have longer time,
For now-a-days are miracles disused,
And man creates what prodigies he will,
Without the answer of celestial portents.
See, see, already is his cheek grown pale—
His knees begin to totter—I will to him.

(*Meets Claudio, Louisa hanging upon Clandio's arm. During this speech many go out.*)

Louisa. Claudio, you tremble; what is't, my dear Claudio?

Claudio. Nay, nothing, nothing.

Louisa. And your speech is faint—
Oh, heaven! your eyes!

Raffaelle. Indeed I think your fears
Are just—he is not well—a chair here quickly.

(*A chair is brought—Claudio sits.*

Louisa. Look, look up, Claudio—

Raffaelle. Soft—his eye grows fix'd;
A film grows o'er it: what a thrill was there!
Look on his quiv'ring lip!

Claudio. I'm faint, my love,
And fear the grasp of death encircles me—
His icy hand weighs heavy on my heart—

Raffaelle. Oh speak not so:— here rest your head, my friend, *(lifting his head)*
Say but another word—have hope, dear lady.

Claudio. Louisa,—should I die,—my friend Cimaro—*(a pause—he struggles for utterance)*

Raffaelle. He cannot—see—cold drops roll down his cheek;
His heart beats low and softly—

Louisa. Mercy, Heav'n!

Raffaelle. She swoons—oh bear her from this fatal place;
Feed her with hope should she revive—
(Exit some with Louisa)

Claudio. Cimaro!
Protect Louisa—farewell—oh! *(dies)*

Raffaelle. Great Heaven!
My friend!—dear Claudio's! gone? aye, gone for ever —*(a pause.)*
That goblet was I fear the fatal cause.

1 *Gentleman.* The goblet that Alphonso gave, my lord?

Raffaelle. Alphonso! ha! Alphonso! 'twas lord Manlio.

2 *Gentleman.* No, good my lord—(*discovering himself.*) I did not—

Raffaelle. Cursed fate!
This was my fear;—ah me! should he be poison'd!
Heav'ns peace be with thee, my unhappy friend;
O that the wretch who did this damned act,
May feel ev'n here the poison of that chalice.
Dear Claudio! Good my friends; retire, I pray you;
It were not well to noise this in the halls.
My absence will not be remarked—Alphonso
Will take the alarm;—therefore speak not of this—
I hope he has not done't;—but if 'tis so—
I pray you now retire and close the doors,
My grief's to me companion—he is cold—
(*Kneeling and clasping his hand.*)

(*Exeunt Gentlemen, and close the doors.*)

Yes, he is cold! the warmth of life is gone!—
'Twas kind too to commend me to Louisa:
A dying husband's words will be obey'd,
Who leaves the world upon his wedding-day;
And his request, methinks, was not so harsh.
Fond, doting, foolish Claudio! Ere I'd yield,
Ev'n in death, Louisa to another,

I'd see her reeking in her ruddy gore,
And writhing in death's agony round my feet.
Men say his nature though was soft and kindly,
And what means that—that they could prey on him:
No, while I live, I live unto myself;
And seeming generosity's a part
Of the great plan: for that I pitied Claudio—
For that I feast yon tribe of empty fools;
And done for that, his death upon my soul
Weighs not the lightest flagging of the wind.
Ho! Julio!

(Enter Julio.)

Remove this carrion hence,
And lay it out with pomp upon a bed;
Let there be mutes, tapers, and mummery,
And store of monks, and masses, and all mourning.
Dead, I will honour him beyond all parallel:
And it is fit: he was Cimaro's rival.
Hence! put my house into a shew of grief—
Call in your fellows—let the rumour be,
Alphonso poison'd him: for me, I am
Retired to my chamber—I'll not spare
Tears or laments—then to my sweet Louisa.

(Exit Julio.)

For her I wear this mockery of woe—
In her my happiness will be more perfect,
Than Paris', when he bore fair Helena

In jocund triumph from the Spartan shore.
He doted on a woman, and he gain'd her;
But, at my beck, wealth, love, pre-eminence,
Come crowding in confusion of delight;
My fame not merely saved without a blemish,
But greeted with the shouts of Mantua,
For generous friendship, constancy and truth.
(*Exit.*)

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A SALOON IN CIMARO'S PALACE; THROUGH THE WINDOWS OF WHICH THE DAY-BREAK IS DISCOVERED.

Enter Raffaelle.

Raffaelle. The drowsy pall of night is drawn aside
By the fresh vigour of the jocund morn;
So yields a widow to a second love
And so Louisa strait shall greet Cimaro.
Upon these dullards, sleep lies heavy yet:
They have no wish to mock their weariness.
Methinks the lark sounds merrily this morning,
Chaunting proud Pæans through the upper air;
And my full triumph very nature hails
In gladsome aspect. I must rouse these sleepers.
Ho! here comes Julio.

Enter Julio.

Julio—I have much
Must be dispatch'd to-day—I trust Alphonso
Will be suspected of this last night's business;

And giv'n into my guard—'tis he must bear
The hazard—so he be condemned for it
I care not if he should escape—and yet
His death were surer:—oh! these poor dull fools!
Like cards in houses built by children—one
Falls, and in tumbling strikes another down—
But such are easily built up again—(*a knock without*)
A knocking there! who is't? go to the door—
I have been wailing over Claudio's corpse.
(*Exit Julio*)
Perchance the duke has news of this already;
No matter—I'm prepar'd—

Re-enter Julio.

Julio. A messenger
From the lady de Commenes.
Raffaelle. So soon—what says she?
Julio. But that she wishes your immediate presence.
Raffaelle. What can this mean? she cannot be so fickle
To love me yet—there's something more in this;
But what care I? I have been used to meet
And out-brave danger. Say that I obey her.
(*Exit.*)

SCENE II.—THE PALACE OF THE LADY DE COMMENES.

Louisa and Maria discovered. Louisa on a couch.

Louisa. If it be so—and sure I think it is—
I am not sorry that I tasted of it:
In death I shall rejoin my Claudio—
It were no happiness to stay from him.

Maria. And would you, lady, die?

Louisa. Oh yes, Maria,
Death is repose with Claudio; I have felt
Even from then a gradual decay;
It grows upon me in a stilly coldness;
Yet ere it reaches to my heart, Cimaro,
I trust, will come—I'd see him ere I die.

Enter an Attendant.

Attendant. Madam, the lords Lodovico and Manlio
Enquire of your health.

Louisa. 'Tis well; I'll see them. (*Exit Att.*)
I would have witnesses.

Enter Lodovico and Manlio.

Lodovico. How fare you, lady?

Louisa. Oh well beyond all hope; calm as the night;
I've slept not—yet my mind has been with angels:
Methought I saw my Claudio stretch his arm

Tow'rds me from heav'n, and with sounds seraphic,
Woo me to come to him—I shall obey him.

Enter Attendant.

Attendant. Madam, my lord Cimaro.

Louisa. Let me see him.

(Exit Attendant.)

My lords, I pray you stay; I have some words
To speak; and be you witness of his answers.

Enter Raffaelle.

Raffaelle. I cannot bid you a good morrow, lady;
Your hope and mine is gone; and common greetings
Sound dull, and heartless, in this wretched time.

Louisa. Aye, my good lord, and sounds from hollow hearts
Are poor indeed to me.

Raffaelle. (*Aside*) This is most strange!
And yet believe me 'tis a happiness
Unhoped for, thus to see you: I thought not
Even that mind so much above its sorrows.

Louisa. No, didst thou think that I should wail my loss;
'Tis but a parting, and we all must die.
My griefs are not of earth: should I invest
My sorrows with the pageantry of woe?
I have a hope too bright to mix with grief—

Thou couldst not think that I should live,
Cimaro.

Raffaelle. Live! lady.

Louisa. Live! didst thou not drug the bowl
For me as well as Claudio?

Raffaelle. I! dear lady!
For thee!

Louisa. Thou canst not look like innocence,
Though thou art full of wiles, this is no time
To mask my words—I am about to die.

Raffaelle. To die! what mean you? you!
you! die! die!

Louisa. Yes, lord;
I should not be so calm else; but the cup
That kill'd my Claudio, lent its help to me.

Raffaelle. Thou didst not drink—'twas poison!

Louisa. Aye, I feel it.

Raffaelle. Foil'd! foil'd! foil'd! foil'd!
damnation!

Louisa. Lord Cimaro,
You put the poison there.

Raffaelle. Who saw me do't?
Yet I care not; did you drink much? no
matter—
A drop were a slow death to fifty men:
But did you taste it?

Louisa. Mark him, lords! my life
But quivers on my lip. Claudio, I come.
Cimaro, thou art guilty! Heav'n forgive thee;

There was a strain of music, heard you not?
Soft, soft and tender, of sweet melancholy;
Nor see you there — but your's are mortal senses—
Ah Claudio—I come—I come.

(Dies.)

Raffaelle. Dead! deep damnation rest on all the earth!
Sweep from its face all things that dwell on it,
And people it alone with direful plagues:
I'd not kill thee, Louisa! O 'tis mockery:
Pour down your fires, rive me to the earth,
Ye dull unthinking heav'ns! why gaze you at me?
Yes, 'twas I killed him—her—all—
I have accomplish'd the decrees of fate.
You, you, you, petty spirits, move half lifeless;
And, being, are not—fools, fools, in my fortune,
Things nobler were encompass'd.

Lodovico. He is mad.

Raffaelle. Mad! reptile! are all mad that tow'r above you,
And do what you daren't dream? My deeds are spent,
Idle as ether—vagrant as the wind—
Hopeless and fineless—I have done my part—
'Tis ended—all, all—here: I had one hope,
One end, one aim—the loadstar of my life—
And it is gone;—my powers are gone with it;

She's dead! Oh! would that I could weep one tear;
It would allay the fever of my soul:—
How—not one drop?—it gushes from my heart;
There, there, there, there.—I'll not endure the gaze,
And taunts, and gibes, that wait upon my fortunes;
Each fool will bless himself he'as done no murder:
And who would live, when thou and all are gone!
(Stabs himself.)
You wonder yet—'tis much; then I'm not fall'n
Beneath myself; I yet can scorn your follies;
While fate crouch'd to me I could live; and now
Its pow'r is not so great but I can die:
This, this is well (*they offer to assist him*): no, no—away, away—
I did despise you living—and my death
Is sacred to myself. Oh! (*they observe him—he suppresses his agony.*) ha! ha! ha!
(*Dies.*)

The Curtain Falls.

EPILOGUE.

(Enter Mrs. Epilogue, an old flirt, with a large fan, &c.)

Gentles good even, Mrs. Epilogue,
I introduce myself; my brother Prologue
Refused his countenance to me, the brute!
And left me thus to hazard a debut:
He is my elder brother,—or I'm sure
He'd have no reason to be so demure.
This is the way with antiquated folks;
They're past the relish of our modern jokes,
Preaching in dull blank verse!—if there's a poet
Within the pit I call on him to shew it
How much our speeches are improved by time,
Since lucky fortune cast them into rhyme.
For were't not for the jingle at the end
Some works might be thought prose—which Heav'n
forefend!
Then such a fuss about instruction too,
As though his canting stead of shew would do.
For Heav'ns sake do not countenance the fellow,
Or where we rant some Methodist may bellow.

EPILOGUE.

A play's a play, say I, and but give me
A *quantum suff:* of roaring,—grief, or glee.
Who is not mov'd when Alexander's mad?
If not the scene—a head-ache makes him sad.
In Comedy what difference in the ease is,
Whether we laugh at wit or Munden's faces?
A play's a vehicle for striking action;
And to bring folks together: though a faction
May hold that they should have a moral with 'em,
Some authors have no morals left to give 'em.
Plays, to gain approbation in these times,
Should be no more than speaking pantomimes:
Or if there needs a theme to talk upon,
The surest hit's to palliate crim. con.
A lady in men's clothes has great effect;
Plays that want noise you'll certainly reject;
And then when all is done, and you have wonder'd
Enough how actors fell, and jump'd, and flounder'd,
And ran against the door posts, while you thought
Soon to decide if in their heads were aught
That so in princely parts they play'd the dog;
Then let there come a sprightly Epilogue,
No matter how 'tis written,—so 'tis said,
That she who spoke 't was pretty and well-made,
'Twill catch some sure applause herself to praise,
In half a hundred pretty, clap-trap ways.
And so I told our moody author here;
But he refused such practices to bear:
"For me," said he,—I've not forgot his speech,
"If I can wisdom, truth, and virtue teach,

EPILOGUE.

"And gain my own applause as well as theirs,
"The stage may claim my most exalted cares:
"But if men come but with their sensual eyes,
"I've shewn a mirror tells them how I prize
"Their vain acclaims, if so—soul, and tongue and pen
"May lie oblivious—and ne'er wake again."

FINIS.

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Mr. Matchem, a Country Gentleman, - -	Mr. Chatterley.
Touchwood, a Young Gentleman in love with Miss Chainwell, - - - - - - - - -	Mr. Wrench.
Query, his Servant, - - - - - - - - - -	Mr. Harley.
Sophia Chainwell, in love with Touchwood,	Mrs. Chatterley.
Sarsnet, her Maid, - - - - - - - - - -	Miss Kelly.

THE QUADRILLE;

OR, A QUARREL, FOR WHAT?

SCENE I.

An Apartment in the House of Mr. Matchem.

Touchwood *on a Sopha,* Query *in attendance.*

Query. The fowling piece is in exquisite order, sir; will your honor like to shoot?

Touch. No.

Query. Would your honor like to hunt?

Touch. No.

Query. Humph! would you like me to take the fishing tackle down to the river?

Touch. No.

Query. Humph! will you have your hat for a walk, sir?

Touch. No.

Query. The sunshine is——

Touch. Detestable!

Query. Then, sir, the shade is——

Touch. Horrible!

Query. The country is——

Touch. Diabolical!

Query. Then let's back to London, for London is——

Touch. Damnable!

Query. (Aside.) Oh, Lord!—*(rises)*—but, sir, will you be in a fine sporting country without shooting, hunting, or fishing?—the squires will quiz you, the dogs will bark at

you, and the partridges pray for you.—Pray, sir, may I be so bold as to ask if any thing brought you into the country in September but sporting?

Touch. To be married.

Query. To be married, that is any thing but sporting—is the lady handsome?

Touch. Faith, I don't know; I take Matchem's word for every thing. He's the man to make up a match of matrimony, horseracing, or cockfighting.

Query. Pretty much alike in the main, to be sure, sir. But matrimony ends only with your life.

Touch. There, Query, I beg your pardon; it ends with her life as well as with mine, thank heaven! and with a good constitution at five and twenty, I think the odds are rather in my favour.

Query. No knowing, sir. Wives are pleasant and tender while young; but devilish tough when once they get old—the first Mrs. Query for instance whom I married because she had sixty pounds a year, and sixty years of age.

Touch. Aye, aye; but Matchem's famous for pairing properly—he is not like those decoy ducks of husbands who say—now, do my dear, do this—and do, my dear, do that, and—oh, my dear sir, Mrs. Jenkins is the most charming woman—damn'd bad temper, but that's nothing—renders home so delightful that even a washing day is a festival—keeps me always in hot water. There, my dear, there's the liver wing. (The devil fly away with her.) Do you like the drumstick, my jewel? (I wish it would stick in her throat,) and so on to the end of the chapter.

Query. And yet, sir, with this chapter of accidents before you, you will venture, and won't even take the example of Æsop's frog, by looking into the well before you leap.

Touch. Look'ye, Query. Sophia Chainwell, that dear, I mean that devilish woman, has deceived me.

Query. Oh, sir, take my word for it, you'll regret her yet.

Touch. Never! did'nt she dance with that impertinent coxcomb Flirtwell—that dandy who flourishes only by the help of his tailor? by the bye, a devilish clever artist that tailor, to make such a puppy look like a man. Zounds, I hate a fellow whose ideas never extend beyond the skirts of his coat, or the ancles of his pantaloons; whose waist is squeezed by the patent stays till he looks like a wasp; and whose coat is pressed, padded, and buckram'd, till he sticks out like a stuffed Turkey—

Query. Which I see you are determined shan't want cutting up, sir; but ah! sir, don't you love her still?

Touch. Love her—no, no, Query, no, I hate her; and if I don't now, I soon shall. I say, Query, have you heard any thing about her? not that I wish to know. Have you seen Sarsnet? that devilish bit of a woman in the form of a chambermaid.

Query. No, sir, the family had left town when I rode to London yesterday. But they do say——

Touch. Ah! what do they say?

Query. That she is going to be married.

Touch. Married! there's a jilt—there's a jade—oh! woman, woman, even the light and flimsy streamer at the mast head lowers its drapery for a moment when the wind ceases; but woman is ever on the wing for change, and knows no cessation in her pursuit of variety—After all her oaths too!

Query. Did you swear none, sir?

Touch. Damn your questions, you know I never swear; married, forsooth, but I'll be before-hand with her.—Fly, Query, and see if the lady who Matchem designs for me is arrived.

Query. Oh, sir, consider a little before you plunge—Miss Sophia is so lovely—

Touch. I won't consider—she danced with that puppy, Flirtwell; she is perhaps at this moment coquetting with the coxcomb; perhaps packed up by his side in a post-chaise, and bribing the boy on the road to Gretna Green. No, no, fly, you rascal, and see if the lady designed for me by Mr. Matchem is arrived. I'll marry her out of hand.

Query. That's easily done; the difficulty is to get her out of hand afterwards. However, I'll go and ask directly, sir; for if you have no curiosity as to your future wife, believe me, I have a great deal as to my future mistress.

[*Exit.*

Touch. Egad, the fellow's right. I do love Sophia still, in spite of her cursed quadrille with Flirtwell: where'er I turn my eye, her sylph-like form will haunt me. If I sit down to breakfast, then, I say to myself, there she would have sat, and poured out Twining's twelve-shilling unadulterated green tea with such a grace. At dinner I am perpetually saying, "Your health, my charming Sophia," and get almost choked with my glass of wine, at finding some antiquated Miss bob her head in return. A pretty figure I shall cut after dancing attendance on her for six months; after escorting her, tilburizing her, tandemizing her, and flirting with her, now to be jilted for a coxcomb,—that's the way constancy such as mine is treated. I wish this Miss Thingumbob were arrived. Matchem swears she's a charming creature, and will soon drive Sophia out of my head.

Enter Matchem.

Match. Ah, ha! Soliloquizing, eh?—very proper on the eve of matrimony, few opportunities for a soliloquy after, I believe. Generally a duet; eh, Touchwood, what you're on the tiptoe of expectation to see my ward, whom I have chosen for your wife.

Touch. Rather anxious to be sure, sir.

Match. Well, she's arrived.

Touch. Is she? Where may I throw myself at her feet? or, I say, can't I have a peep at her through the key-hole first?

Match. Not so fast. Not so fast—she's at her looking-glass, and you don't flatter yourself she'll give up contemplating her own pretty face?

Touch. To contemplate my ugly one—Eh?—no, that isn't very likely.

Match. But why, my dear Touchwood, why will you be presented to her under a false name?

Touch. Why, my dear sir, the names of some of us young rakes about Town, do us more harm than our natures ever intended. And there needs often but to mention them to blow the old women into a fury, and the young ones into a fright. Now you see, my dear Matchem, if you were at once to present me as the George Touchwood, who has been on the pavé so long, why your ward might exclaim, "Oh! the horrid rake," and fly off in a tangent.

Match. Eh, ah! a necessary precaution, certainly.

Touch. In the mean time I shall have an opportunity to convince her that a reputed rake is as harmless as the rest of his species, and make her at length hear the name of Touchwood without taking fire.

Match. I fear you will scarcely find time enough to rub off all the rust.

Touch. Oh, my dear fellow—the moderns have a patent for a speedy whitewashing on all occasions. The King's Bench clears us from the dead weights of debt—Doctors' Commons rids us of the living incumbrance of a wife—and if a man is scoundrel enough to seduce the domestic partner of his friend, he has only to shoot that friend through the body to be placed again at the highest pinnacle

of honor. In short, if the law doesn't hold us out, fashion does, and that's enough.

Match. Well, but to the point; you are determined at length to marry.—Heigho!

Touch. Why do you sigh? 'Tisn't you that are going to be married.

Match. I—oh, no; I, like a fool, wasted forty years in looking after a wife, who I thought likely to realize all my anticipations.

Touch. And never found one, I dare be sworn.

Match. Never till I was too old to render it prudent to put on the yoke; so I have ever since contented myself with matching all my young friends.

Touch. Very philanthropic, truly.

Match. Nothing delights me so much as saving a man from the danger of living a crusty old bachelor, or rescuing a charming girl from the peril of single blessedness. Since my retirement I have married at least forty couple.

Touch. Of which, I dare say, not above thirty-nine are yet discontented with the state, and the fortieth, you know, were only married last week.

Match. But, I say, what have you done with the lady you wrote about in such raptures, and who had turned you into a miracle of constancy?

Touch. I *was* constant, sir—the most constant creature in the world—for six months—I loved to distraction—to madness—and vowed to be her slave for ever.

Match. I am afraid you are not yet cured.

Touch. Oh, yes, quite; and to prevent any return of such a violent disease as love, I am determined to marry without loss of time.

Match. But what could occasion such a sudden change of sentiment?

Touch. What? Why, would you believe it—after all my ardent vows, because I happened to be a little too late for Mrs. Roundabout's quadrille party, there I caught her quadrillizing with a dandy.

Match. Quadrillizing with a dandy!

Touch. Yes—there she was—avancéing thus, with a smirk, so near *(dancing)* that, curse me, if I don't think their chins met. Then dos a dos, thus. Then balancéing, so—till, if it had'nt been for the padded lapelles of the coxcomb's coat, hang me, if I don't think she'd have played at chin-chopper with him, with her toe.

Match. And is it only for dancing?

Touch. Only for dancing! only for dancing. Look ye, Matchem, one likes very well to see a fine girl that one does'nt care about, palming, and kicking, and swinging, and swimming, and all the rest of the cursed waltzing and quadrilling exercise. One may even bear to see one's mother do such things, or one's grandmother—since the old women have learnt to waltz, and quizzes to dance quadrilles. But to see one's wife or mistress in full glee, capering and twisting herself round some tall coxcomb, like the tendril round the poplar, and turning her elbows into an opera-glass to ogle him, thus—*(putting Matchem into an attitude.)* Zounds, 'tis enough to drive one mad.

Match. But did you ever represent the case to her?

Touch. Represent! Sir, I represented it as reasonably as the most dispassionate creature in the world could do; I went up to her as she was hopping and skipping about—Damn it, madam, said I, do you suppose I can bear this?

Match. Very dispassionately, I must confess.

Touch. Oh, 'twas only in a whisper, thus—Do you think I can suffer my wife that is to be, to expose herself to the gaze of the whole world in this manner? I insist upon your sitting down—" Avancez," cried a cursed little coxcomb,

that was placed on a stool to call out the figure of the dance. Do you suppose this is the way, said I, to rivet your bonds?—" Lady's chain," barked the puppy. If, madam, you intend to be Mrs. Touchwood—" Change partners," roared the wretch—you must immediately decide—" Ballancez," screamed the creature—either to dance no more with that cursed coxcomb Flirtwell, or dismiss me—" Chassez," bawled the director—away skipped she, in a chassée, to the other side of the room, and away skipped I, to the chaise and four which brought me here, determined to be guided by the advice you have so often given me, to adopt a wife of your choosing.

Match. You've done right. I'll be bridesman at your wedding, and godfather at your christenings—Miss Mortimer—

Touch. Mortimer! that's her name, is it?—pretty name, Miss Mortimer—pity to change it.

Match. Yes; she's charming and accomplished.

Touch. Accomplished!—hope she does'nt dance quadrilles?

Match. Well, but now, this false name of yours, if it must be—what shall I christen you?

Touch. Oh, Jenkins, Fogram, Higgins, any thing but Touchwood: besides, there's another reason for changing my name, for my affair with the quadrille lady has been too much exposed—since women, you know, always take each other's parts, and never allow a man to be in the right.—If he is jealous, he is a brute—if careless, a monster of ingratitude—if he never quits her apron-string, he's a bore—and if he's a rover and never near her, a bear—so there's no pleasing them. However, when you are ready to conduct me to the feet of your fair niece, I will do my best to please her; and provided she promises never to dance quadrilles with a coxcomb, or waltz with any one

but myself; why, I'll turn Benedict, and entreat your favour as godfather to the son and heir of George Touchwood, reformed rake, and married man. [*Exit.*

Match. Well, well, a pretty scrape I shall get into here; for my friend Touchwood is not the only one who is determined to conceal his name; my Ward, plague take her caprice, whom I intend for him, positively insists also on being introduced in the name of Mortimer, instead of her own. Since, however, I wish so much to see her married, I must e'en comply with her wishes, and that I may not fail, let me re-peruse her letter.

(Reads.) "My dear guardian,"—ah, though she's of age, she calls me her guardian still,—"you have often pressed "me to marry, and I have been ungrateful enough to refuse "twenty propositions which you have made to me, but at "this moment my resolution to remain single is changed, "and I am ready to comply with your wishes; all I request "is secrecy, and that you introduce me as a Miss Morti-"mer—since I have taken this determination, the sooner "the ceremony takes place the better." Eh! the sooner the better. Why, zounds! can any thing be the—oh, no, it can't be—"The sooner the better." Well, well, 'tis lucky Touchwood happens to take the same matrimonial freak into his head at this moment; for never was a pair better fitted for each other.

Enter Sophia Chainwell.

Soph. Well, my dear guardian, I have hurried my toilet, that I might fly to you the sooner.

Match. Ah! my dear Miss Chainwell.

Soph. Hush!—Let me hear no more of that name till I am to lose it for ever; call me by that of Mortimer.

Match. But why change your name before marriage? what reason—

Soph. Fie, Guardian, with your experience, to ask a woman for a reason. Come, come, that is expecting too much of your old favourite. Perhaps it may be romance, perhaps caprice; but suffice it for once that I wish it; and when a woman wishes, I am sure the gallant Mr. Matchem is not the gentleman to deny her.

Match. I wish, for your sake, that I had been born forty years later, and I'd have had you myself; but what good will the change of name do?

Soph. Why, should any thing occur to prevent the completion of our project, it will save me from all confusion on my return to town; my real name will not be compromised. But I hear the gentleman is arrived. Pray, what sort of a creature is it? I would have him handsome, *(aside)* for that will kill Touchwood with jealousy. I would have him witty (for then he may quiz Touchwood at table, when we may happen to meet.) I would have him rich *(aside)* for that will enable me to give greater parties than any abominable woman he may chuse to make Mrs. Touchwood.

Match. Well, he's handsome enough for a man, tolerably witty, and rich enough in all conscience.

Soph. Now, pray speak sincerely. For on the eve of matrimony, or of an execution, the greatest mercy to the poor sufferer is to speak with candour.

Match. Well, your intended husband has every requisite to make a reasonable woman happy.

Soph. Only a reasonable woman—

Match. A little wild or so—the upper story a little eccentric; but the heart is in its right place—Generous to prodigality.

Soph. Oh, a little of my extravagance will cure him of that foible.

Match. Spirits to exuberance!

Soph. They'll soon be moderated in a course of matrimonial lectures. His name?

Match. His name—*(aside)*—What the devil did he say?—Oh, Higgins.

Soph. Higgins—Higgins—Oh! horrid—detestable—where could the man pick up such a vulgar appellation?

Match. There, I knew the name would ruin us.

Soph. To be Mrs. Higgins—to hear it bawled out at the Opera—Mrs. Higgins's carriage stops the way; why the very idea almost stops my breath. Don't you think he'd change it?

Match. He has but to see you, charming as you are, to do any thing and every thing. But do not suffer his name to prejudice you against him. See him, and I have no doubt but you will approve my choice.

Soph. Yes, but Higgins. If there had been the syllable *son* to it—Higginson.

Match. Why, that may come, you know; but I'll away, and bring Mr. Higgins. He is all impatience to throw himself at your feet. I'll be back with him instantly. Higgins—son—ha! ha! ha! [*Exit.*

Soph. Higgins! Oh! the horrid name—to call a man, my dear Higgins—or when he has just melted one into pity with a love letter full of passionate complaints—to have all the delightful sensations obliterated, with the odious name of Higgins at the bottom of it—Your ever faithful and adoring Higgins—shocking.

Enter Sarsnet.

Well, Sarsnet, have you heard any thing?

Sars. No, ma'am, I've heard nothing but the nasty sparrows chirping on the house-top; and the noisy black-

birds whistling in the green trees—there's nothing else to be heard in this dull place—but I don't wonder it's so dull, since it has witnessed so many marriages.

Soph. Then you know nothing?

Sars. Absolutely nothing,—I'm quite ignorant.

Soph. What nothing of this Mr. Higgins?

Sars. Who?

Soph. Mr. Higgins.

Sars. Lord, bless me,—Is that his horrid name?—and are you to be Mrs. Higgins?

Soph. (sighing) Most likely.

Sars. (Spelling.) What, H. I. G. G. I. N. S.—Higgins, eh? I'll never live to hear my mistress called Mrs. Higgins.

Soph. But I am gone too far to recede—

Sars. Oh, dear, no! you have not—there's always time enough in a woman's calculation to recede, till the word, "Yes," has sounded the finale to her liberty.

Soph. But have you heard nothing of him from the servants?

Sars. Bless you, ma'am, they are all as ignorant as myself—all just come; for Mr. Matchem generally marries the whole set once a month. Matrimony seems quite catching in the place; so, I think, the sooner you complete your affair, and I am out of it, the better, or some of the bumkins will be catching me, and that I should not chuse; for, do you know ma'am, the next man who makes me an offer, I shall be terribly afraid of answering, *no.*

Soph. But has the man no equipage—no servant?

Sars. Only a valet.

Soph. A single valet?

Sars. Can't say whether he's single or no, ma'am—didn't ask him—if he be, he wont remain long so here, I'm thinking—for I never saw such gallivanting in my life—there's the steward ogling the housekeeper—the footman

leering at the chambermaid—the gardener making posies for the dairy maid—and the curate muttering over the marriage ceremony in his sleep.

Soph. Well, I don't know why I should wish to see the man with the horrid name before every thing is ready for the ceremony.

Sars. Why, you may see enough of him afterwards, to be sure.

Soph. Heigho!

Sars. And yet, ma'am, I don't think—I dont think—

Soph. What don't you think?

Sars. Oh, I don't think of a great many things, ma'am, because that would be naughty—but, to say the truth, I don't think but what Mr. Touchwood loved you very sincerely, and that you may go much farther and fare much worse—that's what I do think, ma'am.

Soph. And what makes you think so?

Sars. Why, ma'am, he never heard me say you were at home that his eyes did not sparkle with joy—you know he has a very charming eye, ma'am—then, he never received a letter from my hand that he did not give me a dollar. Now, ma'am, a dollar goes for five shillings, and four dollars make a pound. Then, ma'am, I never delivered a kind message to him that he did not kiss the words from my lips before I could utter them.

Soph. A pretty way truly of shewing his love to me.

Sars. (aside) Oh, Lord! what have I said—oh, ma'am, I always placed them to your account, I assure you—But, I say, ma'am—

Soph. Well, Sarsnet, what do you say?

Sars. Don't you—don't you love him still, ma'am? Isn't there a little voice at the bottom of your heart that cries out—Touchwood for ever, and down with Higgins?

Soph. Heigho!—Eh—oh, no, indeed.

Sars. I do think, ma'am, that, as usual, there were faults a little on both sides. To be sure, it wasn't right of him to scold—no, it wasn't gentlemanly to scold, only because you chose to dance with—who was it, ma'am?

Soph. Oh! don't mention the coxcomb—you know I was denied to him the next morning.

Sars. True, but you would dance with him at night for all that, you know. To be sure, one does like to appear one's own mistress, whatever one may be in reality.

Soph. And I intended to tell him in the morning how much I despised the puppy—but Mr. Touchwood quitted Town without coming to see me—

Sars. And very rude it was too—

Soph. And I have heard it whispered abroad too, Sarsnet, that he quitted Town for the purpose of being married.

Sars. Eh! what! Mr. Touchwood married to any body but you—oh, ma'am!—then there's no time to be lost.

Soph. What do you mean?

Sars. Oh, ma'am, we must be before-hand with him for the honor of our sex—where's this man with the horrid name?

Soph. Mr. Higgins—

Sars. Yes—Mr. H. I. G. G. I. N. S, we must marry him immediately. I would not have the world say Mr. Touchwood had deserted, and left us to wear the willow. The wretch—and to think too that I should let any body but my mistress's husband kiss my lips—I'll go for Mr. Higgins directly—then that was what Query came here for; only to find out where we were, to triumph over us.

Soph. Query here?

Sars. Yes, I was going to tell you that I saw him gallivanting with the cook in the pantry—isn't it abominable impertinence?

Soph. Very impertinent—what can he come for? But never mind, 'tis quite indifferent to me.

Sars. Oh, quite indifferent, the wretches! Master and man, both alike—and as to that fellow, Query, with his cupboard love for the cook; oh, if I catch him making love

Enter Query *at the back of the stage.*

to me again—

Query. Where the devil can this master of mine be?

Sars. Ah! there's the wretch, as I live!

Query. Eh! zounds! no—why, yes, it is. Who could have thought, that in looking after *my* master, I should pop upon *his* mistress?

Soph. How is it, Query, that we meet you here, sir?

Sars. Oh, 'tis quite plain; plain as the ugly nose on his face, that he came after us.

Query. No, no, Mrs. Sarsnet; if you come to that, I have much more reason to ask you if you came after us, since we arrived first.

Soph. We! *(aside)* Can Mr. Touchwood then be here?

Sars. For Heaven's sake, be prudent, ma'am, and don't let the traitors triumph! *(to Soph.)* Your master, then, is here, is he? *(aloud.)*

Query. To be sure he is. Do you think he could be any where without me?

Soph. Is he alone, Query?

Query. Yes, ma'am, quite alone; you know, I go for nothing.

Sars. Nothing! Good for nothing things generally do. *(To Soph.)* Well, ma'am, you'll say obey, before he says, love and cherish, yet. What then his—his better half—*(aside)* oh, that I could say *bitter*—is not with him.

Query. Better half—I believe both halves of him are here—I don't know which you call the best. What d'ye mean, Mrs. Sarsnet?

Sars. Come, come, we know all about it. Why, is not he married?

Query. (Examining Soph.) [*aside*] Eh! I'll try her—I'll see if she has any real affection for my master. Oh yes, we've been married these four days. *(Aside)* Come, I'm a pretty good hand at a lie, however.

Soph. (Aside.) Good heavens!

Sars. (Aside.) I could scratch the wretches' eyes out; and already quits Mrs. Touchwood? That's rather rude—but it's like all the brutes of men.

Query. Oh, 'tis for no long time. We expect her here—*(aside)* she's touched—I'm sorry I told her a lie.

Sars. Perhaps, ma'am, she'll come with your husband.

Query. Hus—husband. Is Miss—married?

Sars. Yes, dolt—Miss is married—quite married, and has been married these five days; so tell your faithless, treacherous, good-for-nothing master, that we had the start of him by a day.

Query. Lord, Lord, what fickle creatures women are!

Sars. (Aside.) Courage, ma'am, the fellow isn't worth regretting; but we'll make his heart ache yet—a—a—oh! there's no name bad enough for him,—Well, fellow, and what sort of a mistress have you got? I warrant, a dowdy.

Query. Since I've given him a wife, I'll give him a good one—*(aside)* no; beautiful as an angel, *(aloud.)*

Sars. Who made you a judge of angels, you devil? Is she rich?

Touch. (Calling without.) Query!

Query. As a Jewess; but ask my master, here he is to answer for himself.

Enter Touchwood *at the back of the stage.*

Touch. (Calling.) Query! *(coming forward, is stopped by Query.)*

Query. Hush—not a word—Miss Sophia is married. *(to Touch.)*

Touch. Married!

Query. Yes; her husband will be here presently.

Touch. I'll shoot him; fetch me the fishing-rod---I mean, the fowling-piece.

Sars. (To Soph.—looking round at Touch.) Oh, he has lost all his good looks already.

Soph. (Not looking.) Does he look serious, then?

Query. (Urging on Touch.) Now, sir, step forward and say something cool and cutting—don't spare her.

Touch. (To Soph.) She appears grave, and her eyes are bent to the ground.

Query. She is but just married, you know, and is playing bashful; at her, something cutting.

Touch. I will.—Ma—Ma—Madam.

Sars. (To Soph.) Now, ma'am—dignity and vengeance—say something very severe.

Soph. I will.---Sir---

Touch. I say, madam, I little expected to find you an inhabitant of a place—a place—a place—where I had come to seek the pleasures of retirement.

Query. (Aside.) Lord, how tame—why did'nt you throw in an oath or two?

Soph. My friendship for Mr. Matchem may easily account for my visit; but since Query was at my house yesterday, I still thought you in Town.

Query. Oh, ma'am, I didn't come from my master—I only paid a visit to Mrs. Sarsnet, I assure you, out of mere civility, like my betters.

Sars. And Mrs. Sarsnet did not choose to be at home to troublesome visitors, like her betters—jackanapes.

Touch. (Aside to Query.) The more I look at her, the more serious I find her.

Query. (Aside to Touch.) Let us hope she is very miserable, that will be some comfort to us.

Soph. (To Sars.) Don't you think he appears very grave?

Sars. Oh, ma'am, he's married, you know, and that accounts for it.

Touch. Yes—reflection will succeed in spite of novelty.

Sars. What, you already begin to moralize upon the subject, Mr. Touchwood, eh?

Query. That's a thing Mrs. Sarsnet is not much accustomed to on any subject; but we are speaking of married happiness.

Sars. And that's a thing the late Mrs. Query prevented you being much accustomed to.

Touch. Instances of connubial happiness are, indeed, very rare—heigho!

Sars. (Aside.) He repents already—ain't you glad, ma'am? now do laugh at him.

Soph. True, Mr. Touchwood, it is seldom the lot of mortals—heigho!

Touch. Blinded by some ignis fatuus, which self-love or caprice has created, persons are too apt to torture the slightest accidental circumstance into intentional affront; and in a momentary fit of anger and revenge, to make themselves miserable for life—zounds, she looks as charming as before the quadrille.

Soph. I begin to consider it in the same light as yourself.

Sars. (Aside.) His own portrait—oh! he's as miserable as I wish him. I hope she'll lead him a devil of a life.

Query. (Aside to Touch.) Ah, ha! She sees herself in the picture you have just drawn. I hope he'll prove a devil of a tyrant.

Soph. Evils of this kind generally arise from some misunderstanding.

Sars. (To Soph.) Speak up, ma'am.

Touch. (Aside.) Her situation touches me to the soul; miserable already—how dearly has she paid for her fickleness—united, perhaps, to some old uxorious wretch.

Soph. He has rendered himself miserable for life—united, perhaps, to some rich old dowager.

Query. (Aside.) Now pray don't let her off so, sir.

Sars. Well, ma'am, if you suffer him to go without scolding him well, I'll do it myself.

DUET—Sarsnet *and* Query.

Sarsnet *urging on* Sophia, *and* Query *urging on* Touchwood.

Sars. to Soph. Now scold him well, pray do, ma'am,
I'm sure I wouldn't spare him;
To be untrue to you, ma'am,
The wretch, I cannot bear him.

Que. to Touch. Now something say, severe, sir,
To put her in a taking;
Up to her, never fear, sir,
I see her heart is aching.

Sars. Now scold him well, pray do, ma'am.

Que. Say something cutting, do, sir.

Que. to Sars. You're a vixen; that for you, ma'am.

Sars. (Slapping his face.) You're a blockhead; that for you, sir.

Que. Zounds, how her fingers rattle.

Sars. You'd better hold your prattle.

Que. You're a vixen!

Sars. What?

Que. You'd better not.

Sars. You're a saucy chap,
There's another slap.

Que. Zounds, how her fingers rattle.

Sars. You'd better hold your prattle.
Now scold him well, &c.

Que. Now something say, &c.

Touch. I will profit by her example, nor hurry myself into the same misery.—Yes, yes, I'll be off the match with Miss Mortimer, *(aside.)* Pardon me, madam, if I quit you. To stay in your presence, under existing circumstances, would be indiscreet. Yet Soph—madam, I mean—Believe me, I shall never be insensible to your fate, and would willingly hope it may yet prove a happier one than you anticipate. [*Exit.*

Query. (to Sars.) Mrs. Sarsnet, as my master says, pardon me if I quit you. To stay in your presence, under resisting circumstances, would be indiscreet.—Yet, Sars—child, I mean—I shall never be insensible to your fate, and would willingly hope it may prove better—than you deserve. [*Exit*

Sars. Did you ever hear any thing like their impudence, ma'am?

Soph. It seems to me, that in lamenting his own fate he pitied mine—Really, that is carrying the thing a little too far.—

Sars. Oh! that's right, scold away now he's gone—while he was here you couldn't say a word.

Soph. It is, indeed, true that my fate is in some measure deserving of pity; but his is absolutely horrible.

Sars. Well, thank heaven, we shall have this Mr. Higgins to revenge us both.

Soph. No, no, Sarsnet, we have seen too clearly the dire effects of a hasty choice. Did I persevere in my intention, my repentance might be as sudden, and as deep as his.

Sars. Eh, what, won't you marry Mr. Higgins?

Soph. No.

Sars. And shall all the world say we are left in the lurch?—law! law! why, what are you thinking of, ma'am?

Soph. Of departing immediately for Town.

Sars. What, without seeing Mr. Higgins?

Soph. Yes.

Sars. But, ma'am---

Soph. Do as I order you.

Sars. Oh, Lord! she's serious—and I must obey. Was ever any thing so provoking—no time to form even one acquaintance—nor to make that impudent fellow, Query, jealous. I gave him a good box on the ear tho', and it shall be hard if I don't give him the fellow to it before I go. [*Exit.*

Soph. The example of Touchwood is too striking for me not to profit by it. Pride may support us for a time; but ah! when the heart speaks—its chimeras are dissipated in an instant. [*Exit* Sophia.

Enter Query.

Query. Aye, there she goes, as melancholy as a mop-stick—now I should like to ask her a few questions—but 'twould be of no use, she'd tell me only a parcel of lies—a fickle good-for-nothing creature, that I used to let down the steps of the carriage to with such glee,—to go for to deceive us in this manner,—to jilt my poor master after his having danced after her to the opera—attended her to routes in the evening, and to Bond-street in the morning,—oh, Lord, Lord, 'tis too bad, for there never was such a miracle of constancy as my master.

SONG—Query.

At opera, play, or masquerade,
The morning's shop—the eve's parade,
Still her willing beau he played,
And every eye's command obeyed;
And six months in a lady's train
To dangle, flutter, swear, and sigh,
He may not think himself in vain,
A miracle of constancy.

(Speaking)---Tandemized her to her man-milliner's---I jogging behind---allow me, ma'am, the pleasure of displaying this muslin—tell that man to reach down the ribbon-box from the top shelf---he's six feet two, and won't want a ladder. Pray, sir, how are your prices? I am famed for being very low---now, I think, you're damn'd high. Then away to Bond-street. At Grange's she whipped up an ice, while I whipped the flies off my grey leader. At Hookham's drew up for books and opera boxes. Here's the list---any of 'em at home. "The Man of Feeling" has been at Lady Dawdle's these two days. Lady Drive-about has just taken the Awkward Pedestrian away in her carriage—The Victim of Sentiment is lost—Midnight Mysteries went out this morning—The Marriage Promise is torn to pieces—Thomson's Seasons have not been at home since the hard winter of 1814, and the Constant Lover is gone to be bound.

Thus six months in a lady's train, &c.

At mob, or rout, or crowded play,
I call'd her coach, or squeezed our way;
In short, I may correctly say,
Her slave I was by night and day,
And six months in a lady's train, &c.

There we are, such crowds of carriages—Oh, Lord, my dear, the pole of the next carriage is pushing me behind—Then you're where many a great man wished himself lately—at the head of the poll. Bless me, how vastly full, quite a delightful squeeze, I declare. Really, sir, you're elbows are in my way—not more than in my own, I assure you—Oh! my dear friend! How d'ye do?—What, not further than the hall-door yet?---You'll get up stairs by one, I dare say---Adio!---Hollo! there, that there gentleman going up them stairs has picked this here gentleman's

pocket---A pickpocket!---Oh, I shall faint---Pray, wait till we get up stairs, ma'am---Stop thief!---Oh! I'am gone ---Here's a smelling bottle---the lady's fainting---Stop thief!---Here's *Lavender*, that will do for both of them.

Thus six months in a lady's train, &c.

Enter Touchwood, *at the end of* Query's *Song*.

Touch. Get along, you lazy rascal! don't stand singing here, while you know my safety lies only in flight---not a word---away, I say.—— [*Exit* Query.

Enter Sophia.

Soph. Good heavens, Mr. Touchwood again! I will shew him, however, that I've some spirit left.

Touch. (*Aside*) Oh, ho! she's here, tho' my tandem's ready, I couldn't go without another glance, tho' she is a jilt; but I'll shew her I love her no longer. Madam, I should be sorry to leave a lady's presence with rudeness--- I come to take my everlasting leave, and wish you a remarkably good morning.

Soph. You are quitting Mr. Matchem's, then?

Touch. Yes, madam, and came to see if you had any commands for Town---(*aside*)---how devilish handsome she looks.

Soph. (*aside*) Town---Oh, I shall meet the man every where to plague me. Your resolution is sudden, sir, since you told me you came here for retirement.

Touch. Why, ma'am, my project has not succeeded--- Mr. Matchem receives too much company.

Soph. (*aside*) Oh, he's jealous already of his new wife. I am glad of that, however.

Touch. Even now, ma'am, he expects more strangers---

another lady---a Miss---a Miss---I forget her name——Oh, Miss Mortimer.

Soph. Oh, Miss Mortimer.

Touch. Yes---oh, you know her---nothing very great, I dare be sworn---quite an ugly sort of creature, eh?

Soph. She's a lady I esteem greatly---but, pray tell me, among the visitors here have you seen one Mr. Higgins?

Touch. (Aside.) See him—come, that's good!—Higgins did you say, ma'am, Higgins?

Soph. Yes, sir, Higgins—they say he has some wit and some talent.

Touch. (*Aside.*) Why really, ma'am, I can't say—I have never seen much of Higgins.

Soph. Well, well, it is not certainly your place to praise him.

Touch. (Aside.) Certainly not.

Soph. I see you don't like him; but just give me his portrait, will you?

Touch. Why, madam, really—

Soph. Oh, say it openly—I'll hear all you say against him—I know you wish to abuse him.

Touch. Indeed, madam—

Soph. I dare say the man has neither person, wit, nor talent to recommend him, I can easily believe it.

Touch. Madam!

Soph. That he is stupid to a degree, without one particle of taste or elegance in his composition.

Touch. But, madam—I assure you—

Soph. I believe it all, so say no more about the idiot.

Touch. (Aside.) A pretty character I have got—I had better take myself away.

Soph. (Aside.) I can keep up my spirits no longer.—Well, sir, you said you were going to Town, I believe?

Touch. To Town!

Soph. Yes, why don't you go?

Touch. Town! Oh, yes, I had forgot—True, ma'am, I am going to Town—(*aside*)—Zounds, I shall betray myself.

Soph. (*aside.*) My heart wavers---I wish he'd go.

Touch. Sophia---Madam, I mean---If I can be of any service, command me---I mean quite on common occasions, such as to call your carriage---or to watch over your happiness ---I mean---zounds! I don't mean that---only command me, be assured you will ever find me ready to contribute to your felicity---tho' curse me if I don't think you have destroyed mine for ever. (*Going.*)

Soph. This, sir, is unjust---you alone are to blame.

Touch. Eh! what---it was I who---better to hold my tongue---she'll only triumph in my rage.

Soph. Oh, pray speak, sir---nay, I insist upon your explaining such an accusation.

Touch. Why really, madam, I do not see how you can impute to me a marriage—

Soph. And to whom am I to impute it, sir?

Touch. Why you don't mean to say that I was instrumental to a marriage which renders me miserable for ever?

Soph. Why really I don't see how it could have taken place without your assistance.

Touch. Why you will say next, *I asked* you to marry the coxcomb---I beg your pardon, I forgot he was your husband.

Soph. Husband!

Touch. Yes, your husband.

Soph. Really your error is quite laughable.

Touch. Error!

Soph. Yes, error !---One word will however dissipate it, since I acknowledge I came here for the purpose of taking a husband; but, thank heaven, your unhappy example has made me change my mind before it was too late.

Touch. And are you not married?

Soph. Certainly not.

Touch. Then I'm a happy dog still---Huzza! Forgive my transports, charming Sophia, while at your feet I claim---(*kneels.*)

Soph. (*with dignity.*) What, sir?

Touch. Only the preference over all your other lovers.

Soph. Ha! ha! Traitor, what I've brought you upon your knees then?--(*Starting, as recollecting herself, aside*)--But he's married—(*Turning to Touchwood, with dignity*)—Is it your intention to insult me, sir?

Touch. I am delirious—but it is with joy—with extasy—with delight!

Soph. Rise, I command you.

Touch. Never—I'll take root among Matchem's embracing eglantines, rather than rise before you promise me—

Soph. Rise---pray quit that posture---Consider if any one should see you at my feet.

Touch. Let the whole world see me---Isn't it my place?

Soph. Your place?---and have you no fear of---

Touch. Who should I fear?

Soph. Your wife!

Touch. My wife! (*rises.*)

Soph. Yes---Traitor as you are to your new-made vows, as you were to those you gave to me.

Match. Upon my soul, I don't understand you.

Soph. That vacant look of innocence does not mislead me; you will tell me, I suppose, you are not married?

Touch. Not that I know of.

Soph. Ridiculous! why 'tis not half an hour ago that your own servant told me you had been married these four days.

Touch. Then, as I hope to be so in less than four days, he told you a most outrageous lie.

Soph. And are you really free?

Touch. Free as air; and shall for ever remain so, unless you consent to fetter me.

Soph. Ah! that's another question.

Enter Matchem *behind.*

Match. Ah, ha! at her feet just as I prophesied.---Well, ma'am, your triumph may now be complete.

Soph. Ah, my dear sir, I dare say you are surprised.

Match. Not at all; I am myself too sensible of the power of beauty, to be surprised at its effects on others.

Soph. You must make my apology, sir, to Mr. Higgins; for I cannot now think of him for a moment.

Match. Oh, you are laughing.

Touch. And you see, my dear sir, 'tis quite impossible I can for a moment think of Miss Mortimer; you must make my peace with her---marry her yourself, if you like it.

Match. Nonsense, why you seem to have made your peace yourself, by kissing her hand so ardently.

Touch. What?—this?—this Miss Mortimer! Are you the common sort of creature?

Soph. What! is this Mr. Higgins? Are you the man without sense, taste, or talent?

Match. One would swear you did not know it all the time.

Touch. Why this is my Sophia.

Match. What, the quadrille lady---the dos a dos lady?

Touch. Oh, damn the quadrille---yes, 'tis she herself.

Sarsnet *and* Query *heard without quarrelling.*

Sars. (*without.*) Indeed he is tho' a better man than ever your master was or ever will be, tho' his name is Higgins.

Query. (*without.*) I don't believe it; you only say it out of spite.

Sars. (*without.*) Don't tell me, you good-for-nothing jackanapes, or I'll give you another token of remembrance.

Enter Sarsnet *quickly, running to* Sophia.

Sars. Now, ma'am, every thing's ready.

Enter Query, *runs to* Touchwood.

Query. The tandem's at the door, sir—horses impatient.

Sars. The chaise and four at the gate, ma'am—bandboxes tied up—the footman in the dickey—(*aside*)—let us drive against the fellows, and overturn them into the horse-pond.

Query. The grey leader is quite obstropolus. (*aside.*) Let's whisk by them, and throw the dust in their eyes.

Touch. This is my leader in future.

Soph. Who may sometimes prove *obstropolus* too.

Query. Sir! (*to Touch.*)

Sars. Madam! (*to Soph.*)

Query. What will her husband say, sir?

Sars. What will his wife, say, ma'am?

Touch. How dare you, you rascal, marry me without my own consent?

Query. Oh, Lord, sir, I can dissolve it at pleasure.

Sars. What, ain't you married, sir?

Touch. No more than your mistress is.

Sars. Heaven bless you, sir. (*aside.*) Then he shall kiss me again.

Query. (*to Soph.*) What, ain't you married, ma'am?

Soph. By no other clergyman than Sarsnet.

Query. Oh, Mrs. Sarsnet, what a hand you are at a fib.

Sars. Oh, Mr. Query, how you are given to lying.

Query. Then, I hope, since our master and mistress are *not* married—that we may be.

Sars. What, wretch!

Query. Why, that we may follow my leader.

Sars. That depends upon how you explain the interview with the cook in the pantry.

Query. The empty pigeon pie dish will explain that to your entire satisfaction, as it did to mine.

Sars. (*to Soph.*) Pray, madam, how did you treat Mr. Touchwood? Did you forgive him at once?

Match. No, no, I caught him on his knees.

Sars. (*to Query.*) Down on your knees, wretch, and ask pardon. (*Query kneels.*)

Query. Mrs. Sarsnet, I ask pardon for you're having told me a lie.

Sars. Ah! wretch! you are all too us'd to lying before marriage to make it an uncommon crime; but if ever I catch you eating any body's pie crust but mine, take care.

Match. Come, come, I see a little of my function is necessary here. A general pardon must set all to rights, and I shall have the pleasure of accompanying the forty-first couple of my own making to the altar, which is the only place where you may obtain a legitimate right to quarrel without asking, *for what*?

FINALE.

Let us learn from this couple a moral,
That lovers, when hasty and hot,
Are too apt to cavil and quarrel,
Tho' they scarcely can tell us for what.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Author, if Author he may be called, who puts together such a *thing* as the following piece, (styled by Haymarket courtesy a Comedy!) begs to make his acknowledgements to the Ladies and Gentlemen concerned in the performance, for their exertions in its behalf, to whom, and the humour of the leading incident, which he borrowed, or (as he had nothing to offer in *exchange*) more properly, stole from the Play of "HE WOULD BE A SOLDIER," its success is entirely owing.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Sir Christopher Cranberry, G.C.B.	MR. TERRY.
Sir Lennox Leinster - -	MR. CONNOR.
Captain Littleworth - -	MR. BARNARD.
Swipes - - - - -	MR. WILLIAMS.
Sam Swipes - - - -	MR. LISTON.
Lamotte - - - -	MR. FARLEY.
Potts - - - - -	MR. GOLDSMITH.
John - - - - -	MR. MEARS.
Snowball - - - -	MASTER KILLIGREW.

Lady Cranberry - - -	MRS. MARDYN.
Miss Melrose - - -	MISS LEIGH.
Mrs. Swipes - - -	MRS. GIBBS.
Lapelle - - - -	MRS. JONES.

EXCHANGE NO ROBBERY;

OR,

The Diamond Ring.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Room in the Pig and Windmill. Enter, as disputing,* MR. *and* MRS. SWIPES.

Mrs. Swipes. Well—a pretty thing—for the landlord of the Pig and Windmill. What's the matter with the house?

Swipes. Nothing extraordinary, wife—only I'm a miserable little body—every thing I do turns out ill—that's all, Mrs. Swipes.

Mrs. Swipes. That accounts for your doing so little, for fear of consequences, Mr. Swipes.

Swipes. Do—Mrs. Swipes. Ma'am, I'm done.

Mrs. Swipes. Well, my little vinegar bottle—I've got something that will stir up your soul, if you have one—have you seen the newspapers to-day?

Swipes. No, Ducky—can't say as I have.

Mrs. Swipes. Read, Sir, and tremble—

Swipes. What! any body advertizing for the silver snuff-box we smugged last Sunday in the summer-house?

Mrs. Swipes. Worse—(*gives him a newspaper*)—there—Ship News—Arrivals.

Swipes. Nothing but worries upon worries—where?—here—oh!—(*reads*) "Arrived at Portsmouth from India, His Excellency Sir Christopher Cranberry, G.C.B., and family." Then the devil is come to town.

Mrs. Swipes. Ah—I thought you'd start.

Swipes. Start!—yes, I think I shall, by to-night's coach—but where am I to go to?—this is the grand crash.

Mrs. Swipes. Why, it needn't surprise you—his coming was as certain as quarter day.

Swipes. There you'll excuse me, Mrs. Swipes—the Knight has been liable to sundry casualties, from which the day is exempt—fevers—tigers—the liver—snakes—hurricanes—elephants, and earthquakes; some of these might have picked him off from the fangs of the faculty at home, but he is come, and my only chance of escaping hanging is cutting my throat.

Mrs. Swipes. You have often hinted about this Sir Christopher Cranbery—the time for concealment is over, Simon—tell me the story—woman's wit never fails at a pinch—perhaps I may serve you.

Swipes. Well then—shut the door—see that nobody is listening.

Mrs. Swipes. Oh, no fear—nobody does listen but me—and I'm on the right side now.

Swipes. Sukey, my dear—I have behaved like a scoundrel.

Mrs. Swipes. Simon, my love—I dare say you have—but tell me the news.

Swipes. Why then—Sir Christopher Cranberry, now arrived from India, when he was young, and I steward to his father in Wiltshire, married his sister's governess: being ordered abroad, he dared not own this to his family, but left his wife and infant boy to my care. How-

ever, the business turned out ill—for the lady died, and the little boy—ran away.

Mrs. Swipes. From ill-treatment, I'll be sworn.

Swipes. No—he—he had always a turn for boating and shipping, and he either really went to sea, or else accidentally soused into the round pond, which stood covered with duckweed on Lord Lollipop's Lawn, like a basin of green peas soup, and so stuck in the mud at the bottom.

Mrs. Swipes. What did you never take the trouble to ascertain ?

Swipes. No, my dear—never had it dragged, if you mean that—because that must have turned out ill—for if he was not there, it would have been labour in vain ; and if he were—why, he was as well there as any where else—but now comes the part of the story that promises to turn out ill, as it is.

Mrs. Swipes. Well ?

Swipes. It is fourteen years since I lost him, and I have regularly drawn two hundred pounds per annum for his maintenance up to the present month.

Mrs. Swipes. But didn't Sir Christopher, or his agents, correspond with the young man ?

Swipes. No—Sir Christopher dared not let his family know of the connection till *his* father's death, which happened last spring, at the advanced age of eighty-six. He therefore intended keeping the young man in the dark, till this event should occur ; and to the only enquiry he ever made through the agents, I said I had placed young master with a lawyer in Lincoln's Inn.

Mrs. Swipes. You are a precious fellow upon my word, Simon.

Swipes. Precious—how should I have been able to have found you in shawls, chaises, jaunts, and junkettings, if it had'nt been for the nest egg

—you know I was always obliged to let you have your swing, my dear.

Mrs. Swipes. Yes, my duck, and if things turn out ill, you may chance to have yours now—not that I should joke on such a subject, if I saw the matter in the same serious point of view that you do—can't you tell him his son died since the last quarter's receipt?

Swipes. It won't do, dear. Suppose the affectionate father chooses to visit his son's grave, or clap a monument over him—where can I point out the place?—I can't shew him the duck-pond—where is the parish register of his death?—no—no—in that case they would swear I had murdered him for the money, and I should swing to a certainty.

Mrs. Swipes. Then why don't you try a new plan?—tell the truth.

Swipes. Because nobody believes me when I do; and they'd fancy I had been fee'd by the family to kidnap their cousin.

Mrs. Swipes. Put yourself under my guidance, and the job's jobbed.

Swipes. Speak, Sukey, speak.

Mrs. Swipes. Haven't you a son by your former wife.

Swipes. Why—so she always said—and I fondly believed.

Mrs. Swipes. How old is he?

Swipes. What Sam—Sam Swipes, my boy—let me see—he and the Governor's son were born the same week—about——

Swipes. Never mind when, if they are of the same age, that's enough—exchange him—pass him off upon Sir Christopher as his.

Swipes. Oh—that's it—Mrs. Mountain is brought to bed of a mouse. Now how do you suppose that I can pass that ignorant vulgar pot-boy (for

he is no better), upon the Governor as his son; a fellow with no education, after my story of his having been five years in Lincoln's Inn.

Mrs. Swipes. Lud! I'll warrant you there are many men in Lincoln's Inn who have been there just as long, and who know just as little.

Swipes. Joking won't do, Sukey.

Mrs. Swipes. Try impudence, Simon—see how that will answer.

Swipes. Why, suppose I did, he's such a born blockhead, that he never would keep the secret.

Mrs. Swipes. Avoid that, my dear, by never trusting him with it; make him believe himself Sir Christopher's son, as firmly as you make Sir Christopher believe himself his father.

Swipes. Well, as you say, it certainly is a chance; and if you think you can manage it.

Mrs. Swipes. Think—why not? I haven't been waiting-maid to one of the quality for nothing; and I have little doubt, with the aid of starch, stays, and half an hour's tutoring, that I shall make him as good a beau as the best of them.

Swipes. You shall have your way, Sukey.

Mrs. Swipes. You may say that, Simon. If I undertake this, I run great risks.

Swipes. You save me from the gallows.

Mrs. Swipes. I make great sacrifices.

Swipes. And they shall be remembered.

Mrs. Swipes. Epsom races, Simon—two treats to Vauxhall—Croydon fair—roast pork and walnuts, and as much of Mr. Gage-all's company as I like, and no grumbling, Simon.

Swipes. Damn Gage-all! (*aside*)—Any thing, my dear, that's not likely to turn out ill.

Mrs. Swipes. Well, then, send Sam to me.

Swipes. I will—there's no time to be lost; for though I have quitted Wiltshire, where I lived when Sir Christopher went to India, his agents

know of my residence in London, at least one of 'em found it out by accident; so I am sure of hearing from the anxious parent, the moment he reaches town. So mind your P's and Q's, Mrs. Swipes, and let us be prepared for the worst.—Here, Sam—Sam—— [*Exit, calling* SAM.

Mrs. Swipes. That's settled—I ferretted the freemasons' secret out of him the morning we were married, and now I've got this. If ever he dares to give me a cross word, or an angry look, out they shall both come. As for licking his cub into shape, it is almost hopeless, for never was there so vulgar, stupid a monster seen—lowest in the page of pot-boys. However, I have a turn for making ladies and gentlemen, so I'll try my hand with him.

Enter SAM, *singing.*

"*Jemmy gave me one pound,*
Jacky gave me two."

Oh, mother—here's the day's score—Bang, the box-maker, owes for three pints, and Mrs. Swillandammer, at the big boarding-school, for a gallon of rum shrub.

Mrs. Swipes. Never mind the score—I've such news for you!

Sam. So have I for you—Doctor Dixon has weaned his little girl.

Mrs. Swipes. Fiddlededee.

Sam. Fiddle-de-dee!

Mrs. Swipes. You have no notion what I am going to tell you.

Sam. How should I?

Mrs. Swipes. You can't conceive.

Sam. How can I?

Mrs. Swipes. You have been in an eclipse all your life.

Sam. In a what?

Mrs. Swipes. In the shade, Sam.

Sam. The Shades!—what, down by London Bridge, where chaps drinks wine in a cellar, and finds their way to their mouths by the light of their own pipes.

Mrs. Swipes. No—you have been under a cloud. Hear me.

Sam. Ah—every body in the neighbourhood does that, mother.

Mrs. Swipes. I am not your mother.

Sam. No; I know you are my mother-in-law.

Mrs. Swipes. No—I am no relation, no connection of yours.

Sam. Law, Sukey, what *are* you at?—Didn't you marry my father?

Mrs. Swipes. No, Sam.

Sam. Why then more shame for you—that's all as I says.

Mrs. Swipes. Your father isn't what you take him to be.

Sam. It seems you are, though (*aside*).

Mrs. Swipes. Your father is a man of reputation.

Sam. Ah, I know he is—he has got the reputation of packing quarts of wine into smaller bottles than any chap in the parish.

Mrs. Swipes. Listen, Sam, and don't be a fool. —Whose son do you think you are?

Sam. Why my father's.

Mrs. Swipes. True—but Simon Swipes, my husband, is not your father.

Sam. What do you mean?

Mrs. Swipes. Your father is a Governor, and a Knight of the Bath.

Sam. Sukey—my mother— you are cramming me.

Mrs. Swipes. No, Sam, I am not; and if you will but listen, I'll tell you all. You were left to my husband's care, when you were an infant,

to be brought up as his son: family reasons, which you will know hereafter, rendering it necessary to keep your birth a secret.

Sam. Mrs. S., upon my life, ma'am, I quite blush for you.

Mrs. Swipes. There's no need of blushing—you are neither more nor less than the son and heir of his Excellency Sir Christopher Cranberry, G. C. B.

Sam. A. B. C. Now is that true?

Mrs. Swipes. True! aye that it is.

Sam. Upon your soul?

Mrs. Swipes. If it isn't I tell a fib, that's all.

Sam. Well now, do you know, now I come to think of it, I shouldn't wonder: my old croney, at the Cock and Lion, Titty Bumps, always said I had the genteel go about me.

Mrs. Swipes. Indeed—I am sure—Mr. Cranberry, I beg pardon for not using more ceremony, sir.

Sam. Never mind, I believe every word of it—I feel it, coming all over me a sort of hey—(*assumes airs of consequence*) I say, good woman—good person, send for a tailor.

Mrs. Swipes. A tailor, sir!

Sam. Yes—they makes the gentlemen now-a-days, and the gentlemen owe 'em a great deal for doing so.

Mrs. Swipes. That will do admirably.

Sam. Oh, never you trouble your head about me.

Mrs. Swipes. I am only a little anxious—because at first your behaviour mayn't quite satisfy Sir Christopher, who is one of the old school, I dare say.

Sam. Oh, that's afore my time—I went to the new one arter the old one was pulled down, and the devil a halfp'eth did I learn there but manners.

Enter SWIPES, *in a hurry.*

Swipes. (*to his wife*) It's settled.

Mrs. Swipes. What?

Swipes. A French valet from Sir Christopher has brought the letter I expected, having found me out at the banker's.

Mrs. Swipes. Well, and you told him?

Swipes. Yes; that Samuel Cranberry, Esq. would be with him directly. I couldn't change his Christian name, or he never would have answered.

Sam What *are* they at—laying their heads together in that 'ere manner?

Swipes. What's to be done about his dress?

Mrs. Swipes. Don't you remember the box of Lord Dawdle's left-off clothes in our room, left here by his valet for his bill? The trunk is open; take him up, and see. They'll fit fashionably, no doubt; for the coat will be too tight, and the trowsers too loose.

Swipes (*to* SAM). That's likely to turn out well (*aside*).——Sam,—I beg your pardon, sir—Mr. Cranberry—mistress has mentioned——

Sam. Every thing, Mr. Swipes.

Swipes. Your honoured father has sent for you. Your gentleman is waiting.

Sam. What, have I got a gentleman?—'Gad there'll be a pair on us.

Mrs. Swipes. Follow my husband's instructions, and mind your behaviour. [*Exit* SWIPES.

Sam. Never you fear—I shall cut all my old ways, now I am a beau.

Swipes (*within*). Sam—Sam!

Sam. Coming, sir, coming—Who calls?

(*runs off.*

Re-enter SWIPES.

Swipes. Sukey, step you down to the Frenchman, and make out as good a story as you can. I can't understand what the fellow says.

Mrs. Swipes. I'll obey—Now, Simon, if this succeeds?

Swipes. I'll forgive every thing, ducky. All that I am afraid of is, that it will turn out ill.

[*Exit* SWIPES.

Mrs. Swipes. I trust not; and if we succeed, I shall carry all my points: for besides gaining my husband's good will, saving his neck, and providing for his son, I shall get the booby out of my way, and have the house clear when my dear, sweet Mr. Gage-all, the exciseman, comes to tea. However, I must lose no time.

SCENE II.—*Another Room at the Pig and Windmill,* LAMOTTE *discovered at a Table reading the Newspaper.*

Lamotte. Ma fois—what a beautiful contrée is Anglande—never was nosing so good—here in dis Journal—which is conducted upon des principes de most impartial, one man propose to lend any body so much money as ever he shall want in two hours. Den here is anoder, who shall sell de most elegant physic, which cure all des mortal desordres of de world. Twenty gentlemen who part with their horses because dey have no fault, and sell their houses because dey have made dem parfaitement commode to demselves—den de lotteries are all prizes—all des bals are gai—all de concerts fine, and de people love one anoder so var much, dat ven one of dem shall go for de benefit of his health, to die at Bath or somewhere

else, he is " universally lamented by the whole cercle of his acquaintance." Ah!—micod—what a beautiful contrée—ha—ma foi—voici—la belle mignionette.

Enter MRS. SWIPES.

Mrs. Swipes. I beg pardon, Sir, for keeping you waiting; but Mr. Cranberry only arrived in town to-day, and is yet dressing.

Lamotte. 'Pon ma word, Ma'amselle—I shall have no objection if he shall be to dress himself till to-morrow, if I have de plaisir of your compagneé.

Mrs. Swipes. Polite cretur—La, Mounsheer—you make me blush.

Lamotte. Nature, ma'amselle, has pot des roses on your person, which bloom so beautiful. Migod, she is dam pretty. (*aside*)

Mrs. Swipes. Sir Christopher has his lady with him, I suppose, Mounsheer.

Lamotte. Oh yes—dey are vary English—dey travel like des Tarantule—always together, her ladyship is jeune.

Mrs. Swipes. And Sir Christopher January?

Lamotte. Ah, I don't know—Jeune what I mean, young—mais bien Jolie.

Mrs. Swipes. Jolly, what a bouncing dame—

Lamotte. What is dat bounce—I don't know—but she is beautiful—but she has not more than one and twenty years.

Mrs. Swipes. How many.

Lamotte. Vingt-un.

Mrs. Swipes. Oh—I understand—plays I suppose.

Lamotte. On de top of de forte piano—beautiful—beautiful scramble, skamble, no tune at all—but—pour mois—she is not so pritty what you call as Miss Melrose—oh—to tink of her make de vater come into my leetel mouse—

she is what you call de—ouard to Sir Christopher.

Mrs. Swipes. Ah!

Lamotte. Den Madame, we have de Chevalier Sir Lennox Leinster—jolie Irlandois—micod, how he drinks—brave garçon.

Mrs. Swipes. And what part of the play does he act?

Lamotte. He is de bon ami of my lady—between you and me—in plain Anglishe, entre nous—he shall have de belle passion pour milady—but it shall not do, she is quite comme il faut.

Mrs. Swipes. Ah—this gentleman is what in England we call a friend of the family.

Lamotte. Yes, micod—ha, ha, very friendly indeed, but more particularly friendly to milady. Den dere is Capitaine Littleworth, what brought dem to England—between us, he is very friendly to Miss Melrose—but he shall not do—it is no go.

Mrs. Swipes. Why the whole party seem playing cross purposes.

Lamotte. Yes, de beautiful Miss Melrose, wid her £50,000, is for my young master, now dressing in your house.

Mrs. Swipes. What—for him—£50,000, and a beauty?

Lamotte. Oui—yes—if she does not marry him, she will lose all her propriety.

Mrs. Swipes. All her what?

Lamotte. Her fortune.

Mrs. Swipes. Oh, her property—aye—well—it is too ridiculous—oh dear, Sam marry a beauty, and a fortune. (*aside*) I shall never be able to contain myself.

Lamotte. (*aside*) She shake herself, she is agité in de heart perhaps—I should not be surprized if mois—dat is me, Francois Louis Lamotte, have not tickled her eye a leetil—ah, ma chere, where are you going?

Mrs. Swipes. (*still laughing*) Ho, ho,—you really must excuse me.

Lamotte. Upon my word no—you must permit mois to *cause* a leetel wiz you—*(takes her hand.)*

Mrs. Swipes. I don't know what *kosing* means, but I must not allow you to squeeze my hand so —if that's it.

Lamotte. Pourquois why—you shall be very pretty. –

Mrs. Swipes. You are very—very rude Mounsheer.

Lamotte. I suppose to myself dat you are de daughter of de leetel man of de house.

Mrs. Swipes. No, sir—I am the little man's wife at your service.

Lamotte. Mi cod how polite—it is—what you say of my master you and your little old man—Janvier to May.

Mrs. Swipes. Oh longer than that, Sir, we were married the 21st of December, and ever since Christmas day he has been as jealous as the——

Lamotte. Jealous—ah, it is very general in Angleterre, jealous—ho—ho— *(aside)*—Madam, you shall entirely forgive me what I am going to say, but I have, chez mois—wiz my home—some of de most beautiful shawls as never you shall see in all your leetel life—if you should like me to shew dem to you—when could—I—just drop in.

Mrs. Swipes. Oh, Mounsheer—I daren't for the world.

Lamotte. Sometime—your good leetel husband might be gone out—eh?

Mrs. Swipes. Oh dear no, Sir—I—I—shawls did you say, Mounsheer?

Lamotte. Indie—et des mouselines aussi.

Mrs. Swipes. India?

Lamotte. Oui—I—come drink, eh—your what you call—Thé—eh?

Mrs. Swipes. I don't know what to say—if you do come, you had better come this evening —I'm sure my husband will be very glad to see you—but if he is out.—

Lamotte. Ah! ma fois.

Mrs. Swipes. You mustn't stop a minute.

Lamotte. Madame, you may confide in me; a Frenchman is all honneur from the outside end of the hair of his head, to de top of his toe.

Mrs. Swipes. All I am afraid of is, that my husband may be out.

Lamotte. I will bring de pacquet.

Mrs. Swipes. Hush, here they are.

Lamotte. Mom.

Mrs. Swipes. Make it seven.

Lamotte. Oui.

Enter SAM, *in the extreme of fashionable dress, except the head, which remains in the original plebeian style,* SWIPES *ushering him in.* LAMOTTE *bows very low, and goes up the Stage.*

Swipes. Mr. Cranberry, that is Mr. Lamotte, your gentleman.

Sam. Well, let's go and shake hands with him.

Mrs. Swipes (*stopping him*). Sam, come here.

Sam. Why, one gemman to another.

Mrs. Swipes. Simon, go and speak to Mr. Lamotte.

[SWIPES *engages* LAMOTTE *in conversation.*

Sam. I say, Sukey, will 'em do?—Fits like an orange-peel, don't 'em?

Mrs. Swipes. Admirably!

Sam. (*showing his neckcloth*) And look here—an't that prime?—only you can't think how it hurts; and these here collars gits under my ears, and keeps cut, cut like a knife. I've often heard of

the feelings of a gentleman, but if every gentleman feels as I do, they——

Mrs. Swipes. Hush! not so loud. I have discovered that you are to be married to a lady with fifty thousand pounds.

Sam. La!—but what shall I do about Polly Watts?

Mrs. Swipes. Never mind Polly Watts: you mustn't let her stand in the way of five thousand a year.

Sam. No; only I promised to marry her, you know.

Mrs. Swipes. Yes, yes; but recollect, you are a gentleman.

Sam. And the first thing I'm to do to set up for a gentleman is, to break my promise to a girl who loves me?—I'm damned if I do; there now.

Mrs. Swipes. Well, well, we can settle that afterwards; of course, if you don't like it, you need not marry Miss Melrose.

Sam. I won't.—Let us understand each other. No woman shall carry me off *nolus bolus*, whether I will or no.

Lamotte. (*comes down and bows to* SAM.) Monsieur, s'il vous plait, if he shall be quite agreeable, to come to your Pere—father?

Sam. Pair! what *are* you at?

Lamotte. His heart beat to receive you.

Sam. I've had beating enough in this house in——

Swipes (*stopping him*). Dear young gentleman, your attendant waits.

Sam. Oh, he belongs to me—to order about.

Mrs. Swipes. Yes, it's quite the thing to have French servants.

Sam. Oh, that's gentlemanly too, is it? It's

very right to have French servants, because there are no Englishmen to be found out of employ. Well, come along. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III.—*A Room at a Hotel, belonging to Sir* Christopher Cranberry.

Enter Lady Cranberry *and* Charlotte Melrose.

Charlotte. Well,—my dear Lady Cranberry, what a contrast is the rattling bustle of this overthronged hotel to the regular routine of the last four months on board of our darling ship.

Lady Cran. Considering how agreeable you found the society of her gallant commander, I hardly wonder at your thinking of his Majesty's sloop of war with regret. If in my grave capacity of wife to your guardian, I may be allowed to lecture, I should certainly say, that you have been somewhat inconsiderate in suffering Captain Littleworth to get such command of your heart. Recollect, the vessel is to be commissioned by another officer.

Charlotte. I really am not aware that——

Lady Cran. Where is the girl who is? Those sentimental strolls in the Company's garden at the Cape—those romantic rambles at Saint Helena—and those delightful dances under the line, spoke plainer than words.

Charlotte. I vow, Lady Cranberry, you are quite censorious.

Lady Cran. No, Charlotte; but do you think that I could mistake the purport of those conversations, to which I verily believe you thought there was no witness, save the favourite fourth

gun on the starboard quarter, over which they took place.

Charlotte (*confused*). The Captain did the honours of his ship with the kindness and hospitality so characteristic of the noble profession to which he belongs; if there were any views, he took the trouble to point them out.

Lady Cran. Views, my love, at sea—beyond the horizon.

Charlotte. Oh, a cloud—a——

Lady Cran. A cloud! very like a whale, as Shakspeare says. No, no, my love; if you saw any objects in the air to interest you, they were castles of your own building; but you both looked so happy in your architectural pursuits, I had not the heart to destroy your comfort.

Charlotte. In return for which I will not rally you—upon you know what.

Lady Cran. Indeed no, Charlotte.

Charlotte. Oh, look grave, if you please.—Doesn't conscience tell you the power you have over our figurative friend, Sir Lennox Leinster?

Lady Cran. Power! for shame, child; recollect, I am married.

Charlotte. I do; but do you know I cannot help thinking sometimes that he does not.

Lady Cran. When I am of that opinion, I shall take the trouble to jog his memory. The truth is, I cannot make it out, without having somebody to vent my ill temper on when I am angry.

Charlotte. Or, as is more frequently the case, to share your smiles.

Lady Cran. No. This Baronet, who merely joined his regiment in India, and horrified with what he saw, got sick leave in six weeks after his arrival, is an admirable addition to our little circle, and now he seems quite one of the family.

Charlotte. Perhaps if his reception were somewhat less gracious he would come the seldomer.

Lady Cran. No; he is one of those impenetrable persons who are like tennis-balls—the harder you strike them from the hand the quicker they return. However, our cares for the present must be directed towards our reception of your intended Mr. Samuel Cranberry.

Charlotte. My heart sinks at the thought.

Lady Cran. Well, now do you know, that's not quite so civil, considering he is my son-in-law.

Charlotte. Surely, Sir Christopher will not exert his authority as guardian to force me to——

Lady Cran. His situation is a delicate one. Your whole fortune depends upon the marriage.

Charlotte. O what is fortune?

Lady Cran. Compared with love and Captain Littleworth—you would say. But why make up your mind to dislike Sir Christopher's son before you see him?

Charlotte. I don't know, but——

Lady Cran. But you have made up your mind to like somebody else better. However, don't be rash. He comes a stranger to me, as well as to you; for, indeed, till after the death of my husband's father, I never heard of him. Do not suffer yourself to be prejudiced. If—as of course he has—he has received a liberal education, why shouldn't the son be as good a match for you, as the sire for me? And as for personal appearance, there can be little doubt of that, for I have heard Sir Christopher speak of his mother's beauty as extraordinary.

Charlotte. I——

Enter a Servant.

Sir Lennox Leinster, my Lady.

Lady Cran. Now, Charlotte, for a proof of my resolution. Say I am not at home.

[*Exit Servant.*

Enter Sir LENNOX.

Sir Lennox. But luckily, Lady Cranberry, I am.—To what terrible circumstances am to I attribute the excluding order which passed over your lips, to wound my ears, like a north-east wind over a bed of roses?

Lady Cran. A truce with your metaphors, Sir Lennox. Charlotte and I were going to dress.

Sir Lennox. And so, for the peaceable adornment of your persons, I was to be deprived of the pleasure of bringing you news, and kept out of the temple of the very divinities I worship, till the altar was trimmed out to astonish me.

Lady Cran. News!—What news have you?

Sir Lennox. And a'nt you glad I was admitted? Sure you are. The news—the news is, that our poor friend Littleworth has lost his chance. He may hang his best bower with cypress, and his craped pendant may droop half mast high.—You'll forgive my being figurative.

Charlotte. What do you mean, Sir Lennox? Nothing has happened to Captain Littleworth?

Sir Lennox. It remains with you to say what; but Sir Christopher's son that's lost, was found about two hours since, and I take the earliest opportunity of congratulating your ladyship on the ex post facto acquisition to your family, and you, Miss Melrose, on the probable addition to yours.

Lady Cran. Have you seen him, Sir Lennox?

Sir Lennox. No; but we'll all see him soon. Lamotte is dispatched, so lose no time, lady. Let the twining ringlet fall gracefully, and the rose-bud bloom on the most tempting curl, for the genius of responsive affection steals on the

heart, like the sweet breathings of one's native country.—You'll forgive my being figurative.

Lady Cran. You have no notion, Sir Lennox, what a cold-hearted lady Miss Charlotte is; she is utterly insensible to the delights of victory.

Sir Lennox. And yet, upon my honour, she is mighty susceptible to the claims of heroes. Witness our little commander.

Sir CHRISTOPHER CRANBERRY *heard within.*

Ugh—take it away—I'll never go out again—I'll shave half my head, and live in a cellar first.

Lady Cran. Sir Christopher, as I live!

Sir Lennox. And finding fault.—It's a mighty extraordinary thing, but Sir Christopher is never easy but when he's in trouble; always making difficulties, and seeing the wrong side of things. He is a perfect caricaturist; and besides that——

Lady Cran. My husband, Sir Lennox.

(*Sir* LENNOX *turns up the stage with* CHARLOTTE.

Enter Sir CHRISTOPHER.

Ugh!—what an infernal climate, and what an infernal house! Every window, small and large, open, for the wind to whistle through in different tones, like a row of organ pipes. A man might as well lead the life of an apple-woman, and breakfast, dine, and sup under a gateway, as live in this temple of Eolus.—(*Sees Sir* LENNOX.)—Ugh!—I thought you were gone to your green island by this time.

Sir Lennox. I couldn't leave you, without assuring myself that you had discovered your son, Sir Christopher, and offering my services to assist in making this happy addition to your family.

Sir C. Ugh!—you are very good, sir; but I want no assistance in that way. I have found him.

Lady Cran. I rejoice from my heart at your success.

Charlotte. And so do I, my dear guardian.

Sir C. Yes, I've found him, but such a day of it! It's the fashion now, ma'am, to go galloping about the streets in great overgrown gigs, and there was I stuck up in a string of carriages in Cheapside, for two hours and a quarter, in the rear of a damned tan cart. Ugh!

Lady Cran. You have been in the city, then?

Sir C. Ugh!—don't talk of it, ma'am; it's as big as old Rome, and twice as wicked. The building mania is an epidemic, which has raged so long, that London has outgrown itself—the city is too big for the country, like a child's head that's too big for it's body, and the whole nation has got the rickets.—Ugh!

Charlotte. But when are we to see your son, Sir Christopher?

Sir C. Soon, I suppose—directly. I got the clue to the discovery at my agent's. I hope he'll turn out well—I hope he won't turn out a coxcomb and a puppy. All young men do—ugh!—now-a-days.

Lady Cran. It must be Charlotte's task to cure him of any little turn that way.

Sir C. Yes; and if she looks as she does now, she'll cure him of his passion and his puppyism together.—Why don't you dress, ma'am? I hate your muslin gowns and poodle polls. In my day, a woman who expected to meet an intended husband, would have received him in a dress suited to so important an event. The brilliant centre of a circle of whalebone, panting under a pyra-

mid of powder and pomatum. But—ugh!—that's over; no caps—no hoops now.

Sir Lennox. Oh, then you'd have Miss Charlotte, as the ould song says,—

"Come with a *hoop*, and come with a *caul*."

—You'll forgive my being figurative?

Sir C. I forgive any thing to-day, Sir Lennox, for I have found a son. I'm blest with those round me, who, I believe, love me; but a child—a son—(*appears affected*)—Ugh!—we won't talk about it. Every moment brings me nearer to him.

Lday C. I can enter into all your feelings, Sir Christopher; but had we not better leave you to receive him alone?

Sir Lennox. I perfectly agree with her ladyship, as indeed I generally do. We had better retire. There are meetings at which the society of a third person is uncommonly far from being agreeable.

Sir C. Ugh!—there are, Sir Lennox; but they generally happen with the females of a family—(*a knock at a door*)—What's that—eh?—Yes; my heart tells me it's my child. Perhaps I shall clasp to my bosom the prototype of his angelic mother.

Charlotte. Let us leave you, sir.

Sir C. No, no—share my happiness. Well—

Enter Servant.

Serv. My young master is arrived, Sir Christopher.

Sir C. I told you so—I said it was. Where—where is he?

Serv. He went down with Mr. Lamotte to the servants' hall, and said he was going to take a snack.

Sir C. A what?——What, before he saw me, sir?—

Serv. Yes, Sir Christopher.

Sir C. How, sir!—damn it!—Prefer a cold scrag of mutton to his father!——Get out of the way!—Ugh!—what a set these white servants are!——Lady Cranberry—Charlotte—let us clear up this mistake; let us rush to meet him, and clasp the interesting youth to our hearts.—Ugh! —you rascal——

[*Sir* CHRISTOPHER *makes a blow at the Servant, and Exeunt omnes.*

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Room in the Hotel. Enter* SIR CHRISTOPHER *and* LITTLEWORTH.

Sir C. Ugh? did you ever see such an animal? I ask you Captain Littleworth, you are a sailor, and have poked your nose into every nook of the known world; did you ever see such a savage as that son of mine?

Lit. Why to say truth, he's rather left-handed, as much at a loss as a landsman on a lee shore—he is a rough diamond.

Sir C. Ugh, very rough indeed, and very like a diamond, there's no chance of doing any thing with him but by cutting him; did you see the monster? at luncheon he picked his teeth with the prongs of his fork, and drank all the water out of four finger glasses.

Lit. He is rather strange at first, but—

Sir C. But? ugh, there's no but in the case: a dancing master may teach him to stand still, and good company may rub off the rust—but what a looking animal it is.

Lit. I wonder, Sir Christopher, you had not written to some friend in England to keep an eye on his fitting out.

Sir C. Ugh! Friend, you talk of friends as if they were as plenty as blackberries. Who could I trust? my own family? no, I had only my father and two superannuated aunts with thread-paper

bodies and Cheshire-cheese heads– stiff as pokers, and cold as claret in Calcutta; could I trust them with my imprudence—as to my cousins, they looked upon this boy as a turnstile in the path to my property, and if they could not have got by, by knocking him round—damme, Sir, they'd have stumped him up root and branch.

Lit. The young gentleman does not much resemble you.

Sir C. Me, no—no—I never was like *that.*

Lit. Perhaps (you'll forgive me, Sir Christopher) he is like his late mother?

Sir C. What? ugh—I think I see myself married to a woman with a face like his! Ugh no, his mother was an angel—*is* an angel—don't let's talk of that; where is he now?

Lit. Learning to dance quadrilles of Sir Lennox.

Sir C. Sir Lennox, ugh—what, he's here again, is he?

Lit. Yes, sir, just giving Mr. Samuel confidence to dance before Lady Cranberry.

Sir C. Ugh, if Sir Lennox had less confidence in dancing *after* Lady Cranberry, it would be quite as well, but it's the fashion now, a married couple can never travel without a bodkin, eh, ugh, here they come, oh, what shall I do? the hyena, the hippopotamus of Africa, the rhinoceros, the domestic pig, all love their young, but—ugh.

Enter SIR LENNOX, SAM, *and* LADY CRANBERRY, *and go round to right of* SIR CHRISTOPHER.

Sir Lennox. Oh perfection, quite superlative, (comparatively speaking) upon my honour, Sir Christopher, your son gets on rapidly.

Sir C. Ugh, I dare say, in dancing, men who can't make their way by their heads, try the ef-

fect of their heels, and so kick themselves into society.

Sir Lennox. That's being driven to extremities, Sir Christopher, you'll excuse my being figurative.

Sam. (*to Sir C.*) But I say pa, —I—I what d'ye call it, Sir Lennox?

Sir Lennox. Pirouette.

Sam. Ah, I pronetun—common.

Lady Cran. (*aside to Sir C.*) I assure you he improves upon acquaintance, not but that I sympathize with you in the disappointment of your sanguine hopes.

Sir C. Sympathize, ma'am, ugh, I have not patience to talk to him, ma'am, (*to Sam*) young man, these—these gentlemen are aware of the—ugh—what a—(*turns away.*)

Sam. (*imitates his father.*) Ugh—wha—what are you at?

Sir Lennox. Sam, my worthy and excellent friend, your manners are rather of the least polished.

Lit. As we say at sea, you are rather slack in stays, Mr. Sam.

Sam. Am I? I wish you had them on instead of me, that's all.

Sir C. Ugh—there's no doing any thing with him.

Lady C. Your father, Mr. Cranberry, is not quite satisfied with your general conduct, it is—(you'll forgive me) too rude.

Sam. Rude!—Come that's a damn'd good one. Sukey always said, though I wasn't no conjurer, I was uncommon civil.

Sir C. (*much irritated, goes up to him.*) Sir!

Sam. (*very cooly.*) Well, Sir, to you; and what then, old cockey.

All. Oh!

Sir C. (*in despair*) Ugh!—'tis hopeless. There's no prospect here.

Sam. How can I help that? Why don't you take lodgings out our way by Battle Bridge?—You'd have plenty of prospect there, right facing the cinder heap, with all the grunters a grazing on ashes, as nice and as natural as need be.

Sir C. Young man!—The accounts I heard of you, led me to believe, you were tolerably read.

Sam. Red!—What, like a soldier?

Sir C. A soldier, no. I never expected to find you any thing half so good. Don't you understand? I had heard, that you had studied, and now I find you without any pursuit.

Sam. No, you don't. You had to run arter me a bit.

Sir C. There! Now I give it up.

Lady Cran. You are too hasty, Sir Christopher. I'll endeavour to come at these points in a more gentle manner. Mr. Samuel, you must allow me to offer you a seat in my carriage to the exhibition.

Sam. What! inside, along with you?

Sir C. Ugh!

Lady Cran. Certainly. Have you any passion for the art?

Sam. What *are* you at?

Lady Cran. I mean, do you draw?

Sam. No, ma'am, not now.

Lady Cran. Oh then, you did draw?

Sam. Draw!—Like a cart horse.

Lady Cran. In chalk or water?

Sam. (*aside*) Chalk and water! She takes me for a milkman. No, ma'am, in beer.

Sir L. In beer! Mr. Cranberry?

Sam. Yes, I used to draw every drop as was drank at Jem Hill's at the Nag's Head, till he

got one of them 'ere pumps in the bar what makes the porter come upstairs of itself.

Sir Lennox. "And bids the brawny porter walk up stairs." You'll excuse my being figurative.

Sir C. Sir! Son; if you are my son, what do you think my feelings are? Don't you think that after having lived upon the hopes of seeing a child all excellence and accomplishments, I must be distracted at finding you as you are, Sir?

Sam. Well, I'm sure you are not over civil. What did you expect, leaving me to be reared as I have been?

Sir C. I heard you were brought up to the bar.

Sam. Well, so I was brought up to the bar.

Sir C. You were?

Sam. Yes, and had a proper education forit. It was there they did teach me to draw.

Sir C. What! Conveyances?

Sam. (*aside*) He means the wheelbarrow with the pots. Yes.

Sir C. But pray, was there any likelihood of your ever being called?

Sam. Called! Bless you, I expected to be called every five minutes up to the time you sent for me.

Sir C. In what Inn, pray?

Sam. The Pig and Windmill; if you call it an Inn.

Sir Lennox. No, no. Sir Christopher means what Inn of Court.

Sam. Court! Oh, oh. This was in a court, least ways at the corner of one, with a great gash light in the front.

Sir C. Ugh! What does it all mean?

Sir Lennox. Upon my honor, you should make further enquiries upon this score, Sir Christopher.

Sam. Oh, come now, never you bother your head about the score, Paddy. I settled all that before I came away.

Sir C. (*outrageous*) Ugh, Sir Lennox, Littleworth, I shall go mad ; take him away, do something with him till dinner time ; his brains, if he have any, are turned.

Sir Lennox. Come then we'll take a drive in my tilbury.

Lit. And I'll ride with you.

Lady Cran. And doom me to the horrors of a tete-a-tete.

Sir C. Ugh, madam, I should think you are hardly competent to judge of that misery, you try it so seldom.

Sam. Shall we go out into the fields, all along up Primrose Hill?——I say, Captain, what's your Christian name?

Lit. Frederick.

Sam. What a pretty name! it's a sight prettier than Sam. Damn Sam! Can't I be new christened, now I am a gentleman? However, if you do call me Sam, don't call it loud ; for if you do, if I was before the King himself, God bless him, I should say—Coming—coming, sir.

[*Exeunt* Sam, *Sir* Lennox, *and* Lit.

Sir C. Lady Cranberry—ma'am——there are some subjects which it's very disagreeable to talk upon. You may, perhaps, anticipate what I am going to say?

Lady Cran. I haven't the smallest notion, my love.

Sir C. Ugh!—you'll forgive me ; but it strikes me you have a notion, and a pretty strong one too.

Lady Cran. How is such wonderful prescience attributable to me?

Sir C. Ma'am, Sir Lennox Leinster is here too much—it don't please me.

Lady Cran. I am very sorry for that, my dear, because it pleases me particularly.

Sir C. Shall I tell you what the world will say?—

Lady Cran. My dear, you have always cautioned me against believing any thing the world does say.

Sir C. I am serious, Lady Cranberry.

Lady Cran. I cannot bring myself to be serious; for if I did, I should be angry. Am I to deny myself society, merely because it happens to be pleasant? To me, Sir Lennox, I own, is a very agreeable companion.

Sir C. May be so—but not to me.

Lady Cran. That is a point upon which men and their wives not unfrequently differ. You are a cross creature, Sir Christopher.

Sir C. And you are a giddy, thoughtless one. I speak as a friend—see less of Sir Lennox.

Lady Cran. And I speak as a wife—What harm is there?

Sir C. Harm? Ugh! if I thought there were any harm, you are not the person I should speak to, Lady Cranberry. I am going to talk with Charlotte about this ill-advised condition of her marriage, and mayn't see you till dinner; think of what I have said in the interim. You cannot accuse me of impertinent meddling in your special amusements, when I freely confess it is to avoid the observation of that world which you affect to despise, but which you dearly love, that I caution you to change your conduct. Take it in good part, Lady Cranberry, and remember that we unfortunately live for others as well as ourselves. [*Exit Sir Christopher.*

Lady Cran. Now, then, he is angry. What ought I to do? I like this good natured Sir Lennox, certainly. I love my husband,—decidedly. How then do these sentiments clash. I'll own all this to Sir Lennox himself, and beg him to be less here—else it will appear so abrupt. Shall I write a note to him—no—that won't do. Yes it will—the pen and the tongue are both of them dangerous weapons to meet an admirer with—but—he is not an admirer. To write, or not to write, that's the question—a question moved by my heart—and shall be seconded by my hand—and the ayes have it without a division.

[*Exit Lady* CRANBERRY.

SCENE II.—*Another Room at the Hotel.*

Enter LAPELLE *and* LAMOTTE.

Lam. But, my dear Mistress Lapelle, I speak to you in your capacité of own woman to my Lady Cranberry.

Lap. Well, you may talk, but I have no patience with you. You run about the house, displaying all your foreign finery, on purpose to tempt my lady to lay out her money.

Lam. Not for myself—pas pour mois—le brave François—good Frenchman.——Comme mois—never shall be de boutiquer, de dam shopkeeper, but pour un Chevalier ou Marquis en detresse, I vill ondertake to sell, one pour milady who is in no detresse at all, I will ondertake to buy.

Lap. But does my master, Sir Christopher, know of your dealings?

Lam. Ma foi—oui—and buys some jolie tings of me, whenever dey shall be beaumarché, what you call cheap; but to-day I have a bargain—Oh!

Lap. What,—a yard or two of bilious looking lace valuable, like an Earl's ermine only for its dirt.

Lam. No, Madame Lapelle—no soch ting—it is un pierre—a diamond,—*(shews her the ring.)*

Lap. Why, La—it's a ring.

Lam. Oui—how very quick you are, Madame Lapelle.

Lap. It's very pretty.

Lam. Pretty, c'est superb—if they was alive, Pigott or Pitt woo'd jump at soch a jewell.

Lap. Well, now, Mr. Lamotte—how much have you the conscience to ask for this?

Lam. It woo'd be cheap at five hundred guineas—say pounds, and it is giving it away.

Lap. Well, my Lady is coming—you'd best shew it to her.

Lam. Mrs. Lapelle—you love your Lady.

Lap. I do; but she is so thoughtless, I hate to see her waste her money.

Lam. If you love your lady, advise her to buy this ring.

Lap. It would be very bad advice, Mr. Lamotte.

Lam. Sur mon honneur, I lose money by it.

Lap. Well, then you had best say nothing about it.

Lam. Yes, we vill; and if you get milady to buy it, you shall have ten guineas for yourself out of the losings.

Lap. Upon my word, Mr. Lamotte, you are pre-eminently persuasive.

Enter Lady CRANBERRY.

Lady Cran. Ha, Lamotte.

Lam. Oui, milady—such a bargain!

Lap. Yes, my Lady, a diamond as big as your thumb?

Lap. Yes, my Lady, and almost as bright as your eyes.

Lady Cran. Upon my word it's very handsome.

Lap. 'Tis beautiful, my Lady.

Lady Cran. If it were mine, I would not keep it as a ring—it's too large—it's—but it's quite childish thinking about it. What now may be the price?

Lam. Your Ladyship shall have it for four hundred and fifty pounds, ready money.

Lady Cran. That's a large sum; but it's not so dear, considering.

Lap. Dear my Lady, its prodigious cheap—buy it, my Lady.

Lady Cran. I could not if I would; for, to speak truth, Lapelle, I have no money.

Lam. You have de better thing, milady—a husband.

Lady Cran. This is rather an unlucky day.

Lap. I'm sure if Sir Lennox saw it——

Lady Cran. Sir Lennox! what makes you think of him?

Lap. Seeing him, ma'am—he's on the stairs.

Lady Cran. Then don't let him find you here, Lamotte. Questions may arise which will lead to explanations, and he'll think—dear me! I'm afraid I care too much for what he thinks. At all events, I would not have him suppose my husband would deny me any thing I wished for, for the world.

Lap. Come, Mr. Lamotte, let us step into my lady's dressing-room, until Sir Lennox is gone.

Lam. A true Frenchman is too brave garçon not to be charmed wid a *tête à tête.*

[*Exeunt* LAM. *and* LAP.

Lady Cran. I wish Sir Lennox had not returned. I am ashamed of my own folly. Why do I worry

myself about Sir Lennox? I'll speak to him candidly; my husband dislikes his perpetual attentions, and in this house his word should be law.

Enter Sir LENNOX.

Sir Lennox. What, Lady, alone!—like the solitary pine near Theseus' fane, which

" Ting'd with various hues arrests the eye,
And dull were he that pass'd it heedless by."

Forgive my being figurative.

Lady Cran. You have left my son-in-law?

Sir Lennox. Faith, Lady, he left us, and has descended into the servants' hall. He's somewhat like a fish, that can barely lift his head for a moment into a strange element, and dips again directly. I don't so much lament his disappearance, since I have found you; for when out of your Ladyship's society I'm worse than he, for I am like a fish out of water altogether.

Lady Cran. Really, Sir Lennox, those expressions of regard——

Sir Lennox. Regard!—Oh, you mistake the thing—friendship is the word; it is the purest sentiment in the world, and ten thousand times more gratifying than love; for when sincere it is always reciprocal.—But you seem out of spirits, Lady Cranberry.

Lady Cran. No, not out of spirits, but tired, at that odious party last night at my aunt's, and after a whole day's journey.

Sir Lennox. 'Twas dull; how our opinions coincide. Your milliner deserves a civic crown for your dress last night; that simple style becomes you, and those silken ringlets flowing loosely spread themselves like meshes to catch the hearts of gazing lovers; you'll excuse my being figurative.

Lady Cran. Lovers, Sir Lennox—I hope not. —I am married, and shudder even at temporizing on such a subject—there's the distinction, as I tell Sir Christopher, if a friend like you—

Sir Lennox. (aside) Oh, there has been some discussion has there? Yes.

Lady Cran. It is friendship.

Sir Lennox. To be sure, and I should not think a husband could be found unconscionable enough to complain of my visits?

Lady Cran. Why do you know—you must not be angry, but I do think your being so perpetually here does put Sir Christopher out of temper.

Sir Lennox. 'Pon my honor he is a mighty extraordinary person.

Lady Cran. And he has been so invariably kind since our marriage, that I would not annoy him by thwarting his wishes for the world.

Sir Lennox. The greatest favour you can bestow on me, is to obey punctually all his injunctions; so far from offending me, Lady Cranberry, it will only afford me a new proof of that sound sense and excellent heart which I have known you to possess since I was honoured with your friendship.

Lady Cran. You have made me quite happy, Sir Lennox.

Enter LAPELLE *and* LAMOTTE.

Lap. Did your Ladyship ring?

Lady Cran. No. (LAP. *is going.*)

Sir Lennox. Mrs. Lapelle, where might you have lived before you came to Lady Cranberry?

Lap. La—why, Sir Lennox?

Sir Lennox. I only ask.

Lap. With the Dowager Duchess of Dumbledon.

Sir Len. All I meant to say, was, that in well regulated houses it might be just as convenient to tap or rattle at a door, before you came in, that's all, Mrs. Lapelle.

Lap.—(*aside*)—Well, I'm sure, things are come to a fine pass if he's to order me about.

Sir Lennox. And what is the accomplished Mr. Lamotte doing here?

Lady Cran. Lapelle, why did you let Lamotte in?

Lap. (*to Sir Lennox*)—Chevalier, if you shall have l'envie to make little cadeau present, I have a bargain.

Sir Lennox. What is it?

Lady Cran. Oh nothing, Sir Lennox—there—(*indicating for* LAP. *and* LAM. *to go.*)

Lap. Sure, you'll let Sir Lennox look at it, my Lady.

Sir Lennox. Allow me——

Lady Cran. No, no—don't.

Sir Lennox. Upon my word it's mighty pretty, and what do you ask for this, Mr. Lamotte?

Lam. Quatre cent cinquantre livres—four hundred and fifty pounds.

Sir Lennox. (*looking at the ring*) I'm no great lapidary, but it strikes me to be mighty cheap. Why don't you buy it, Lady Cranberry?

Lady Cran. Because I have half a hundred other rings, and because I don't want it.

Sir Lennox. Oh, Lady Cranberry, truth lives in those eyes—you can't deceive me——you wish for it.

Lap. (*aside*) Deuce take the man, he's a conjuror; he shouldn't look at my eyes so for all the world.

Sir Lennox. (*shaking it*) It sparkles. Why don't you take it? Allow me to make it yours; and if while looking at the present you should

now and again think of the absent, I shall be too happy.

Lady Cran. I would not for the world, Sir Lennox.

Lam. Consider how cheap.

Lap. It's quite an opportunity.

Sir Lennox. And opportunity should never be missed.—Mrs. Lapelle, don't you think your lady ought to take it?

Lap. Indeed I do, Sir Lennox.

Lam. Oui, she has got ten good reasons for what she says.

[*Lady* CRAN. *looks at the ring.*

Lam. (*aside to Lap.*) If you were to volunteer banker?

Sir Lennox. Oh, will I!—I see, Lady Cranberry, you are too squeamish. I must make this a matter of business. Allow me to settle with Lamotte. Repay me when you choose; or, if you get tired of the ring, send it me back.

Lap. There can be no harm in that, my Lady.

Lam. None in the least, my Lady.

Sir Lennox. And these people speak quite disinterestedly.

Lady Cran. Well, do you know—'tis vastly silly—but in that way I have a mind to indulge myself.

Sir Lennox. Say no more—let me put it on. Lamotte, I'm your debtor;—wait for me in the hall.

Lam. If you please.

Lady Cran. Yet stay, stay, a thought strikes me I might as well be without it.

Sir Lennox. Why?

Lady Cran. I can never wear it.

Lamotte. What him too big? too little? settle him in a minuet.

Lady Cran. No, no; but my husband knows

all my diamonds, and this addition would instantly catch his eye, then if I said you—

Sir Lennox. Oh dear, not for the world. I hate a man to feel conscious of any obligation in that way, however trifling.

Lady Cran. Well then, Lamotte, take back your ring.

Sir Lennox. Stay, stay, invention I thank thee, Lamotte take back the ring.

Lamotte. Sir.

Sir Lennox. Lamotte, you are a quick clever fellow; you must take the ring and offer it to Sir Christopher Cranberry, your master, for fifty guineas.

Lamotte. As I am a man of honneur I cannot do him.

Sir Lennox. You don't perceive, I'll pay you the difference presently on Lady Cranberry's account; you offer it to Sir Christopher, as I tell you, and he, struck by its cheapness, will doubtless purchase it, and of course present it to his Lady.

Lady Cran. Well that is a capital idea, so I shall have the ring a present from my husband, and owe you fifty guineas less.

Lamotte. Ah — ah — I comprend, I understand; you pay me 400*l.*—de ballance, a sort a firm, as de call it between you and Sir Christopher, only you wish to be the sleeping partner, eh?

Sir Lennox. Oh curse your technicals, but not a word of her Ladyship's name or mine.

Lady Cran. And by no means together.

Lap. And never let my master know you are to get more than fifty guineas.

Lamotte. I go to do him. [*Exit Lamotte.*

Sir Lennox. Now I think your scruples are surmounted.

Lap. Your Ladyship's carriage is at the door.

Lady Cran. I must drive to my aunt's before dinner.

Sir Lennox. And as I borrowed her Ladyship's opera tickets for last night, under promise to return them in person, if you don't think it *quite* scandalous, I'll escort your Ladyship hither.

Lady Cran. Well, we must not tell Sir Christopher, but as you are such a favourite of my aunt's, I don't think I can refuse you.

Sir Lennox. Upon my honour I believe you.

[*Exeunt Lady Cran. and Sir Lennox.*

Lap. Oh that mistress of mine, if she would but make me her confidanté; but no, she's too prudent for that as she thinks, and so trusts herself to the guidance of her aunt, who, I foresee, will lead her into all sorts of scrapes, half in mischief and half in good nature, and when she finds she has gone rather too far, will be the first to turn prudish upon her young victim, and censure as crime what at most was indiscretion—I have half a mind to let my master into the secret of the ring—and yet no, it's ticklish work meddling in matters of this sort, for ten to one I should be turned away in the scuffle, so I'll e'en wait a little longer, and Sir Lennox better take care that I don't pay him off for the lecture he chose to give me before my lady, that's what he had.

[*Exit Lapelle.*

SCENE III.—*The same Room as at first. Enter* CHARLOTTE.

Charlotte. This is indeed a trial for my heart. Never has Captain Littleworth spoke of any sentiment beyond that of friendship: why should I think he feels any other? I have no grounds therefore to refuse this son of my guardian on the plea of prior attachment. And yet, I cannot bear to shut myself for ever from the possibility of

an union with the only man who ever interested me. I expect Mr. Cranberry every instant by appointment: what if *I* own to him the feelings I dare hardly own to myself, and throw myself upon his generosity; surely Sir Christopher won't force me to compliance.

Enter SAM.

Sam. There she is.

Charlotte. Yet, it does not rest with him. Oh what a wretched situation, and my poor father to have been the innocent cause of my distress.

Sam. I say Miss—Miss Thingamy.

Charlotte. Ah you, sir,—ah, you there?

Sam. I say Miss, did you ever read Dilworth?

Charlotte. Who?

Sam. He has wrote the Spelling-book with his night-cap on and a pen behind his ear.

Charlotte. Not that I recollect.

Sam. Ah, I thought not, else you'd ha knowd better manners: he says in that ere book, says he, never talk to yourself, but always pay attention to any body what comes to see you.

Charlotte. Sir, I have to apologize, I'm sure I—

Enter SIR CHRISTOPHER, *unseen, crosses and exit by a door in flat whence he watches the progress of the scene.*

Sam. Oh, I am not one as makes words of a straw: however I'm come here by my father's desire, to make myself agreeable, Miss.

Charlotte. In the way of friendship, I—

Sam. Oh dear no, quite another sort of way, in the way of courtship; I say, Charlotte, (*begins to pull her about*) may not us keep company along with one another? I say, are you good natured?

Sir C. Ugh!

Charlotte. Good Heavens, Mr. Cranberry! As the son of my respected guardian, you must be always estimable in my eyes, but——

Sam. Bless your eyes.

Charlotte. But I would rather you should not take the air of a lover.

Sam. Take the air? oh, if you want to take the air, what d'ye think of Cumberland Gardens, just by Woxhall Bridge, where the flag flies; oh my eyes—that's the place for my money, the beautiful wind what comes blowing over the mud and timber, vich with the pipes and baccy, makes it charming in July, I tea'd there very often last summer.

Sir C. Ugh!

Charlotte. You are very kind; but, Mr. Cranberry, I wish to speak candidly to you, to—to—come to the point at once.

Sam. La, Miss, what *are* you at?

Charlotte. I mean———

Sam. Oh, I know what you mean, you want to be married as soon as you can, that's always the way with the women the minute they set eyes a top of me.

Charlotte. You mistake. Oh, Mr. Cranberry, if you could but know the state of my heart, you'd pity me.

Sam. I dare say I should; I'm of an uncommon tender turn.

Charlotte. Nothing can be more painful than this sort of interview, where one has a prepossession.

Sam. I do not know any thing about prepositions, as you call 'em, but I was going to open my heart to you.

Charlotte. Yes, but I would spare an useless declaration of a passion which cannot in the end be happy.

Sam. But who's a going to be in a passion? not I, I'm sure.

Charlotte. I mean that if one loves one, it would be the height of madness to marry another.

Sam. Well, now do you know that's just what I said to myself as I come through Cranbourn-alley.

Charlotte. My guardian, Mr. Cranberry, is wholly unacquainted with the affair, and I trust you will not mention it.

Sir C. Ugh, the cunning gypsey.

Sam. Oh, not I, Miss: I don't want the old boy to know any thing about it; but what puzzles me is, how you found it out.

Charlotte. Found out what?

Sam. What I was going to say to you about Polly Watts.

Charlotte. About who?

Sir C. Ugh!

Sam. Why the other, you know.

Charlotte. I'm in the dark entirely.

Sam. Dear, dear, are you?

Charlotte. Who is the person you have just mentioned?

Sam. Why she's the other. Did not you talk about my loving one and marrying another? she's the other.

Charlotte. What, then is your heart engaged?

Sam. Particularly, Miss.

Sir C. Ugh.

Charlotte. Thank heaven, we feel alike.

Sam. Not quite: I love Polly Watts: who is your friend?

Charlotte. The interrogatory is rather abrupt.

Sam. Eh?

Charlotte. Spare me the answer, I fear even to trust myself: the object of my affection knows not the influence he possesses, perhaps he never may.

Sam. La, bless your heart, I'll run with a letter for you, if that's what you want, and keep it as clean as a whistle all the way.

Charlotte. No, no, it must rest in my own heart, perhaps for ever. I trust that this candid communication will be considered as confidential, and not be betrayed.

Sam. Bless you, Miss, I'm as close as the cupboard door at the Pig and Windmill.

Charlotte. Oh, can I confide in you?

Sam. I wish you could see Polly Watts; but she can't get out only every other Sunday, else I'd bring her here when my father was away.

Charlotte. Has Sir Christopher any idea of the attachment?

Sam. Eh?

Charlotte. Does Sir Christopher know of this?

Sam. Not no more than nothing; how should he? But please the pigs, she shall be Mrs. Sam Cranberry before this day week.

Sir C. Ugh!

Sam. I've as good as promised her that: upon my life she's a nice girl, she's a good deal redder in the face than you are, and her elbows are red and her hair is red, and she has got a slight cast in one of her eyes; but I likes that, it makes her look roguish.

Charlotte. That is a mere matter of taste.

Sam. Taste! oh my eye, if you was but to see her in the purple poplin petticoat trimmed with pink (a little stained with fruit in the front,) which her mistress gave her, and her buff body and blue bonnet, and her putty coloured boots, laced up the leg, la, you would say she was tasty.

Charlotte. I don't know what to say, if Sir Christopher——

Sam. Say, why if the old boy was here himself, and said a word agin Polly Watts,——

SIR CHRISTOPHER *here loses all patience, and rushes down, knocking away Sam.*

Sir C. Ugh, you monster.

Sam. I say, what *are* you at?

Charlotte. Gracious heavens, my guardian!

Sir C. Well, Miss Charlotte, why do you tremble? eh? no deceit about you; I am mad, stark, raving; my wife gone out with the only man I bid her avoid, my ward determined to marry any body rather than the man she should, and the heir apparent of the House of Cranberry under an engagement to lead to the altar Miss Polly Watts, a draggle-tailed drab, with a carrotty pole and a squint.

Sam. Only a sprightly cast, as I hope to be saved, Papa.

Sir C. Get up and get out of my sight, out of my house. I disown you.

Charlotte. Oh, sir, be patient, consider he is your son.

Sir C. I don't believe it; there is an innate feeling of Nature, which mysteriously points to our offspring, I have it not, I feel it not; but I'll be satisfied, and see the man himself, who has, at all events, behaved like a villain, in leaving his mind as void of cultivation as Nature left his person free from attraction. Come along, Miss Charlotte, I shall reserve what I have to say to you till I get clear of this non-descript animal—ugh—

[*Exeunt* Sir Cristopher *and* Charlotte.

Sam. There's a pretty chap for a father; why he's worse than Sam Swipes. I'm damned if I'll be a gentleman if they want me ever so much, so I'll go down to the only sociable fellow I've met with yet, Mr. Potts, the butler, and just swig as much of my papa's claret as I can hold, and then back to the Pig and Windmill and Polly Watts; I say Potts, Potts, below. [*Exit* Sam.

ACT III.

Scene I.—*A Room in the Hotel.*

Enter Sir Christopher *with the Ring.*

Sir C. Well, I have bought many bargains of that fellow, Lamotte, but this is beyond all in cheapness. I cannot fancy it taking advantage, unskilled as I am in concluding the purchase with a man who is doubtless an adept. Fifty guineas—well—well.

Enter Lapelle.

—Is your lady returned, Mrs. Lapelle?

Lap. No, Sir Christopher.——(*Aside*) He has got the ring, I see.

Sir C. Your lady dines at home, I suppose?

Lap. Yes, Sir Christopher.

Sir C. When she comes in make my compliments to her, and say I wish for a little conversation with her.

Lap. Yes, Sir Christopher. [*Exit* Lap.

Sir C. Poor Eliza! I believe I did speak rather harshly to her this morning—yet 'tis better; and I was out of humour with that animal they want to pass upon me for my son. Poor soul! Eliza does not see her danger; and, armed with conscious innocence, walks through the wild crowd round her, a second Una. I was to blame.—Ugh!—I

am always to blame. I'll own my fault, when she comes in, and this bauble shall be a peace-offering.

Enter Captain LITTLEWORTH.

—Well, my gallant commander, whither art thou bound?

Lit. About to top my boom, Sir Christopher, as we say at sea.

Sir C. What going, eh?—What are you going for?

Lit. My business is a little complicated, Sir Christopher. My relations, if I have any living, have never heard of me since I went to sea.

Sir C. Yes; but can't you postpone your journey? Wait, wait till we know more about this son of mine.—Ugh! I hate the name. Don't run away; it's not like a friend—it's not like a sailor. Tell me where are these relations.

Lit. I scorn deception, sir. My father,—and I am ashamed to say I know not if he be alive,—is of the humblest class; but I would rather have died than neglected him, had not his cruelty, almost unnatural in a parent, driven me from his house, to seek my fortunes on the wide world.—As a child, I had always a predilection for the noble service to which I have now the honour to belong, and at eleven years of age left my paternal roof.

Sir C. Poor boy!

Lit. I got down to the western coast, and unacquainted with the forms of entering the navy, on which I had fixed my affections, addressed myself to the captain of a frigate, I happened to meet in the streets of Plymouth, he heard my story, and took me on board his ship as a midshipman, thus founding my fortunes, from that

day under his care, and having continued to shift from ship to ship on foreign stations, by dint of hard service and sickly seasons, I have, in fifteen years, worked my way to that rank to which I am just made.

Sir C. You are—you are a—oh, if I had such a son, what a happy old fellow I should be. Instead of having a thing tacked to me as heir, whose chief indication of humanity is walking upon his hinder legs, and whose greatest ingenuity is exerted in ascertaining which of those is his right, and which his left.

Lit. Do not hastily banish him from your heart. Heaven send he may make a suitable husband for Miss Melrose!

Sir C. Ugh!—for Miss Melrose!—for Polly Watts. Sir, he's under an engagement to marry a dowdy, and he shall fulfil it. The poor creature shan't lose her husband, because he's up in the world. A pill like Mr. Sam. Cranberry can't be swallowed without gilding.—But you, Littleworth, have an eye upon some girl too—Eh?—you dog, you know you have;—you half owned as much this morning—eh?

Lit. I must plead guilty, Sir Christopher; but the woman I love never can be mine.

Sir C. Never?—Ugh!—damn never! It's a nasty, nipping, knock me down, nonsensical word. Where there's a will there's a way.

Lit. In my case there's a will, Sir Christopher, which I sincerely wish were away; she I love is rich—I am poor.

Sir C. Poor! no. With a fathom of bunting to make a pendant, a sailor can't be poor; for though we are not so apt to praise our protectors in peace time, we don't forget—No, no, young gentleman, you are not poor.

Lit. My birth, as I said, is obscure.

Sir C. Birth!—what signifies that?—Cardinal Wolsey's father was a butcher.

Lit. Aye, but this lady, by the will of her father, loses her fortune, unless she marries a particular person.

Sir C. Gad, that's very frightful.

Lit. That particular person happens to be the son of a man who has shewn me every kindness. Shall I requite his friendship, by endeavouring to thwart his wishes, and alienate the affections of the young lady from her destined husband?

Sir C. (*grows agitated and animated*) Does she love him?

Lit. It is hardly possible she should.

Sir C. Why—why shouldn't she love him, sir, eh?

Lit. Their—their acquaintance has been too short to have excited such a passion.

Sir C. Did you ever mention your attachment to the girl?

Lit. I have never dared.

Sir C. And do you think her guardian hasn't discovered it?

Lit. Certainly not.

Sir C. And he has allowed you to read with her—sing with her—dance with her—talk with her?

Lit. Yes, he has.

Sir C. Then you have a right to ask his consent to your marriage?

Lit. What, and rob her I love of her fortune?

Sir C. Curse fortune!

Lit. If he should refuse?

Sir C. Run away with her!

Lit. That would be ungrateful.

Sir C. Serve him right for letting matters go so far.

Lit. I dare not adopt such a plan.

Sir C. Then you are too cold blooded for me.

Lit. Nay, Sir Christopher, do not reproach me for doing what I consider to be my duty—suppose it was your own case, what would *you* say?

Sir C. Say? Why I should say, Fred Littleworth, I'm not such a damned old fool as you take me for; I'm not so blind as to suppose Charlotte Melrose can rival Polly Watts, or marry such a Whango Jang as the fellow they call my son; I'm not such a tyrant as to force the girl's inclinations for my own advantage—if it militates against my interests, I'm to blame; and since Charlotte will lose forty thousand pounds by marrying the man she loves, I'll forfeit twenty for her comfort—and so, Fred Littleworth—we understand one another.

Lit. Is this possible, Sir Christopher?

Sir C. To be sure. I have been employed by the Government of my country to put down slavery abroad; you don't suppose I'm going to revive it in my own family.

Lit. But my birth——

Sir C. Curse your birth! I won't hear a word about it.

Lit. My gratitude——

Sir C. Is due not to me, but to that source whence flow all our blessings—to Heaven, Sir, for having given you a heart and qualities, which place you eagle high above the richest rascal that rolls in wealth.

Lit. Words never can express my feelings, Sir Christopher—may I—may I—really—tell Miss Melrose——

Sir C. Miss Melrose.—Why you are as timid as a pale-faced puppet of quality on her presentation day; go, Sir, and tell Charlotte Melrose that you have my authority to address her.

Lit. I—fear—she will hardly believe me, Sir Christopher.

Sir C. Lest she should not, I'll invest you with credentials. Here, Littleworth, as a proof of my sincerity, and as a mark of my gratitude for all your attention on board your brig, accept this ring—(LITTLEWORTH *refuses it*) I insist.

Lit. Sir, in any attentions I had the happiness to offer you on the voyage I did but my duty.

Sir C. Oh, no; I know—I am quite aware of the comfort you fishes feel with a family of helpless land lubbers lumbering you up. An Excellency and his Lady, or a couple of mawkish Misses, and a brace of dangling Aids-du-camp. No, no; take it, my dear fellow, and wear it for my sake.

Enter POTTS.

Potts. I beg your pardon, Sir Christopher, but my young master, Mr. Samuel, is so very riotous in the servants' hall, that I really am afraid some mischief will ensue.

Sir C. Ugh—there it is! I'll come down, Potts, and thresh him. Come with me, Littleworth, and restrain me.——My life is like an April day, a mixture of showers and sunshine.—Damn it, if I wouldn't compound for perpetual rain, if I could once get quit of my *son and heir*. Come along. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The Servants' Hall.*

A long Table, with Glasses and Bottles.—SAM *at the head of the Table; several Chairs as if just vacated. Opposite to* SAM *a little Black Boy.*

Sam. Well then, Snowball, let's have some more claret. Don't talk, you Neger! let's be

jolly, and no talking. Any fools can talk, but it's only rich fools as can swizzle claret. I'll give you a toast, Mungo:—Here's Polly Watts, and confusion to Gage-all, the long-legged excise-man.——My eyes! why that ere's wool as you've got a top of your nob, Mungo.

Enter LITTLEWORTH.

Lit. Mr. Cranberry ——

Sam. Lord love you, how do you do? You are rather behind time.

Lit. Mr. Cranberry, I have induced Sir Christopher to stay up stairs, for fear of consequences.

Sam. Fear! What are you afraid of, you humbug? I say, Potts, here; Potts below—psha!

Lit. Why do you call the butler?

Sam. Because I want more wine—more claret,—my little blackymoor shall have his skin full—no fear of spoiling his complexion.

Lit. (*driving* MUNGO *out*) Get out of the room, you little rascal. (*Boy runs off.*

Sam. Why do you disturb the company?

Lit. This is really very unpleasant.

Sam. If you don't like it—leave it.

Lit. No; but to find you drinking by yourself.

Sam. That's because you came so late; there were five or six of us at first, but when her Ladyship came home, jingle went the bells, and away ran all the chaps, and left me quite solentary.

Lit. This is very painful.

Sam. Then brush.

Lit. Really, Mr. Cranberry, a gentleman, a man of fortune as you are, should be above doing these sort of things.

Sam. Ah, but then I like to do 'em below best, you see.

Lit. Your father wishes to see you.

Sam. But I don't want to see him.

Lit. Come with me, let me entreat you.

Sam. Well, I'll first finish the bottle, to prevent its being wasted.

Lit. Not a drop more.

Sam. Then I'll take it up stairs into the drawing-room, and swig out of the snout—(*they struggle, and the bottle is broken*).—I say, what *are* you at? there's a pretty commence. Sukey would have broken my head, as soon as looked at me, if I'd a done that.

Lit. Sukey—psha—who's Sukey?

Sam. Sukey—why—Sukey Swipes, to be sure.

Lit. Swipes—that name?—(*aside*)—My own.

Sam. Yes, it's rather a blackguard name, e'nt it.

Lit. The devil—yes—that is; but who, who is Sukey Swipes?

Sam. Sukey, Sukey is my first father's second wife.

Lit. How d'ye mean?

Sam. Why, I had a father before that old chap up stairs. I was brought up by Simon Swipes.

Lit. Did he live in Wiltshire?

Sam. As sure as eggs is eggs—down close agin Bapton.

Lit. And he—Swipes—where is he?

Sam. At the Pig and Windmill. It's a house of call for boot-makers. I'm going down there presently just to shew 'em my legs in the tap room—I'll take you—nothing to pay.

Lit. There needs no confession of my low origin now (*aside*). What, then, Swipes keeps a public house?

Sam. To be sure—the Pig and Windmill; was steward to my second father's father, and I was brought up as his son.

Lit. Aye—and this is my old playfellow, after all, that I once thought my brother—(*aside*). And why pray?

Sam. Why they was afraid the gipsies would steal me, I was such a lovely infant.

Lit. What wonderful changes a few years make. Pray do you remember Swipe's son?

Sam. Oh yes; a fellow I thought was my brother, who used to read Captain Cook's Voyages, and swim gallipots.

Lit. And he was not your brother—

Sam. No; I'm a gentleman,—he was a pot-boy.

Lit. Damnation—Sir—I—I——it's very true (*aside*) Where is he—do you know?

Sam. What that chap—la, his name was Fred, like yours; I thought it sounded somehow natural to me—he—Oh, they say he stuck in the mud at the bottom of Lord Lollipop's pond.

Lit. Suppose he should be alive——

Sam. Well, suppose he should, and suppose he shouldn't,—what then—who cares? I'd give him an odd pound or two to set him up in a chandler's shop.

Lit. Sir, I—I— can't bear this.

Sam. Oh, oh; I twig, I smoke—I heard Charlotte say you was no great shakes of a family yourself, that's what sets you up.

Lit. Did she, did she? Oh, you'll drive me mad; but, it's very foolish, it's quite useless to be angry with you.

Sam. Quite—because if you gives me any of your sauce, I'd just as soon turn too and lather you, as any body else, or else fight you for a stimulating sum, money down—so there now.

Lit. I was wrong—I forgot myself—I deserve it.

Sam. Well, then, that's enough; say no more about it. Let's go to Sukey.

Lit. Yes, yes, I will go with you—high or low he is my father; and no disadvantage of birth can disgrace a man half so much as disowning the author of his being.

Sam. What *are* you at?——Sukey your father!

Lit. No, no, Mr. Cranberry— I—am your man for a walk to the——what—what do you call the house?

Sam. Pig and Windmill.

Lit. Pray, is my father married again?

Sam. How the devil should I know?

Lit. Psha!—I mean your father.

Sam. What, Sir Christopher?—Yes; you know Lady ——?

Lit. No, no; I mean Swipes.

Sam. Yes, I've had the luck on't—two pretty young mothers-in-law.

Lit. Well, I am anxious to see her, so let us be off. You are a lucky fellow; I a wretched one. We'll go down to Simon's, and you'll see in the sequel you have been born under a good sign.

Sam. Good sign? yes, that I have—Pig and Windmill.—Come along.——

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A Drawing Room at the Hotel.*—*Enter* LADY CRANBERRY *and* SIR LENNOX.

Lady Cran. What a provoking creature that aunt of mine is: she is always out when she

should be at home; but now, Sir Lennox, you must positively go.

Sir Lennox. I'll vanish at Sir Christopher's approach like dew before the sun, you'll excuse my being figurative. I can't, however, avoid staying just to see how my little stratagem of the ring turns out.

Lady Cran. Oh, wait till you see it sparkling on my finger. Sir Lennox, as my aunt says, a joke is every thing; I wish she were here to enjoy the fun. Lapelle tells me Sir Christopher bought the ring in a minute of Lamotte, and then immediately asked for me. If we had staid at home but half an hour, I should have had it now.

Sir Lennox. Let's be patient, people talk of my making bulls, but if we dare tell them of this small matter of the ring, it would prove that though I may make a little mistake now and then in speaking from the hurry of my feelings, yet when I coolly contrive a thing, there's no great chance of my making a practical blunder.

Lady Cran. I give you every credit for this contrivance; but here come Sir Christopher and Charlotte: now remember, Sir Lennox, don't dine here if you are asked.

Sir Lennox. Oh no, I'll plead an engagement of long standing, and sit down to a melancholy Maintenon at Long's.

Enter SIR CHRISTOPHER *and* CHARLOTTE.

Lady Cran. Ah, my dear Charlotte, I haven't seen you for ages.

Sir C. Ugh, that's not unlikely: she has been in her proper place, ma'am, at home.

Charlotte. My dear Eliza, my heart is so full.

Sir Lennox. You have'nt been out since luncheon, Sir Christopher?

Sir C. No; but you have, I believe, Sir Lennox.

Lady Cran. Oh, my dear Sir Christopher, I must either intreat or scold you into buying me the most bewitching little phaeton and pair of ponies.

Sir Lennox. So perfectly elegant.

Charlotte. I'm sure my guardian wont refuse to day.

Sir C. Ugh, what does it mean? all upon me at once; stag in a pond, ugh.

Sir Lennox. Not I, Sir Christopher; we Irishmen scorn to take odds against a single man.

Sir C. Ah, not quite so particular with *married* ones; I'll talk of your purchase by and by; I have something better to mention to you.

Lady Cran. Indeed.

Charlotte. (*interrupting.*) Oh, Sir Christopher.

Lady Cran. (*to Sir* LENNOX) The ring, I'd lay my life.

Sir C. It's an affair of hearts.

Sir Lennox. (*aside to Lady* CRAN.) We fancied diamonds.

Sir C. This young lady, Ma'am, has taken it into her head to ruin herself, marry a beggar, lose her fortune, and take up with a low-born sailor.

Lady Cran. Oh, Charlotte.

Sir Lennox. Oh, Miss Melrose.

Charlotte. Guardian, why expose a weakness I owned in confidence to you? I'm ready to obey you.

Sir C. So you shall, so you must, Miss; so first of all know then, my Lady Cranberry, that the

marriage between my son and this girl can never take place.

Lady Cran. Never.

Sir C. No, Ma'am, he's engaged to be married to a—a Miss Watts.

Lady Cran. What, the Watts's of Gloucestershire?

Sir Lennox. Or of Watts's Town Ballynoclinicohologan, County Kildare?

Sir C. No, of Upper Brook-street.

Lady Cran. Ah, then I don't know them: unless it's an old woman with five daughters, who gave us a ball without supper, before I went to India.

Sir Lennox. I never heard of 'em.

Sir C. I should think not: the lady is—I must break it to you, ma'am; or will you, Charlotte?

Charlotte. Oh, no; you, Sir.

Sir C. Well then, Ma'am, your intended daughter-in-law—is—is—kitchen-maid to your friend Mrs. Macscratchit.

Lady Cran. What!

Sir Lennox. Och!

Sir C. There's every prospect of *domestic* comfort, Ma'am.

Sir Lennox. Yes,

> "The flame that he's so rich in
> "Lights the fire in the kitchen."

You'll forgive my being figurative.

Lady C. What a match!

Sir C. A vastly good one, Ma'am; she'll be too ugly as a wife to attract admirers, and too low minded to encourage them.

Sir Lennox. (*aside*) Upon my honour, the old gentleman is throwing off the figurative.

Charlotte. Not the most eligible connection in the world.

Lady Cran. I shall die.

Sir C. So shall we all; but Mr. Sam Cranberry loves the girl. He has made her believe so. She loves him. Damn her taste; but she shall have him.

Lady Cran. Are you serious?

Sir C. Faith, Ma'am, there's not much to laugh at in the matter. Poor Charlotte loses her husband and her fortune, but never mind, I've settled it all, and so wish her joy. She shall be Mrs. Littleworth before she's a month older.

Enter a SERVANT, (*gives a letter.*)

Servant. A note, Sir Christopher, from Captain Littleworth. [*Exit* SERVANT.

Sir C. You'll excuse me; (*reads*) how—(*reads aloud*)—"The certainty of my low origin ascer-"tained, by an extraordinary connection which "exists between us, renders my farther commu-"nication with your excellent family incompa-"tible with my feelings of respect for them. I "dare not trust myself with an interview. May "you all be blest with health and happiness. "The mark of your esteem which you gave me "this morning is now of tenfold value to the "heart of your affectionate friend and servant,

"FREDERICK LITTLEWORTH."

What—what does it mean?

Charlotte. Gone does he say, left us?

Sir C. Here John, Thomas, somebody—anybody.

Enter SERVANT.

—where is Captain Littleworth?

Servant. He went out, Sir, with Mr. Cranberry, he wrote this note in the hall: my young master said he was going to the—the Pig and Windmill, I think.

Sir C. Ugh. I know.

Sir Lennox. That's a mighty singular name for a hotel.

Lady Cran. We mustn't lose him thus.

Sir C. Lose him, no; here, sirrah, some of you go follow the Captain to that infernal house, and tell him I beg, I intreat, I desire him to return immediately—you hear?

Servant. Yes, Sir. [*Exit.*

Sir C. Origin! We are all men, and though we mayn't all start at the same post, we shall all come to the same goal. I shall be miserable till he returns.

Lady Cran. His feelings are so high, and sensitive, that I can easily imagine his delicacy on any point connected with himself.

Sir C. Delicacy. He's as modest as a miss. Why it was with great difficulty I persuaded him, in return for being plagued with us for five months, to accept of a ring this morning.

Sir L. A ring!—(*aside*)—Come this is lucky, it will lead to the subject.

Lady Cran. A ring?

Charlotte. Oh I assure you, a very beautiful one. A diamond ring.

Sir L. Blood and ouns! (*aside.*)

Lady Cran. A diamond ring! Why where in the name of fortune did you get a diamond ring?

Sir C. Why, my dear, I purchased it of my worthy servant, Mr. Lamotte.

Sir L. (*aside*) Oh, my four hundred guineas.

Lady Cran. And gave it away! Why it's worth five hundred pounds.

Sir C. What you have seen it, have you, ma'am? How's this?

Lady Cran. Nothing, only—only Lamotte offered it to me.

Sir C. I intended it for you, myself, my love; but I am sure you will not lament that Little-

worth has it; so, come, don't let's talk about that. I only grieve it wasn't more intrinsically valuable; come, come, this, I foresee, will be an afternoon of events; I've a word or two for you, Charlotte—I suppose we shall see you at dinner, Sir Lennox.

Sir Lennox. I shall be most happy in the honour of accepting your polite invitation.

Sir C. And I say, my lady, we'll have a few refreshers in the evening, and make a party to meet your ladyship's daughter-in-law, Miss Polly Watts, eh? [*Exeunt Sir* LENNOX, *and others.*

SCENE IV.—*A Room at the Pig and Windmill, in the flat a Window and practicable Window curtain.* LAMOTTE *and Mrs.* SWIPES *discovered at Tea.*

Mrs. Swipes. La, Mounsheer, you are sich a man.

Lamotte. And you, so gentil, your face is more fair dan de milk in de pot, your smile more sweet dan de lump in de basin.

Mrs. Swipes. How you flatter.

Lamotte. Ah micod que non, to you dat is impossible.

Swipes. (*within*) Sukey, Sukey, I say.

Mrs. Swipes. Oh, Mounsheer, here's my husband.

Lamotte. Le diable, how shall I escape, mois?

Mrs. Swipes. Oh, I don't know, he'll murder me.

Lamotte. And me too, perhaps.

Mrs. Swipes. What's to be done?

Lamotte. I will pop my little body into dis room.

Mrs. Swipes. Worse, and worse, that's our room; stop, there is one chance, I've tried it before (*aside*) get into the window.

Lamotte. Out of de window shall be better.

Mrs. Swipes. No, no, stand there, don't move for your life. (*He stands in the window, she lets the curtain down over him—she sits down at a table and feigns to be ill.*)—Oh dear, oh dear.

Enter LITTLEWORTH *and* SWIPES.

Lit. He doesn't recognize my features, how little in comparison is he altered.

Swipes. This gentleman has called with Mr. Cranberry, who has gone away again, he wants you to procure a lodging for him.

Mrs. Swipes. I'm sure I'll do any thing for any gentleman, Simon, and you know it.

Swipes. What's the matter with you?

Lit. (*aside*) My mother-in-law is very pretty.

Mrs. Swipes. I am very ill, my dear, very ill indeed.

Swipes. But what is the curtain down for?

Mrs. Swipes. I can't bear the light in my eyes.

Swipes. Yes, but there's no reason why I should be kept in the dark.

Mrs. Swipes. Oh yes, my dear, there is.

Lit. Never mind, Mrs. Swipes, never mind me. I—I—understand you had a son whom you lost many years since.

Swipes. I had, Sir; but he turned out ill. Poor fellow, he was drowned. (*bell rings*) Sukey, mind the bell.

Mrs. Swipes. (*aside*) What shall I do? Must I go?

Swipes. To be sure, don't you see I'm engaged?

Mrs. Swipes. Deuce take the bell. What will become of my beau. [*Exit* SUKEY.

Litt. You are quite sure that boy was drowned.

Swipes. Certain. But what makes you so very earnest?

Lit. I am more interested in this matter than

you think for. Do you recollect whether he took any thing with him?

Swipes. I can't say.

Lit. (*shews him a miniature.*) Did you ever see this before?

Swipes. Why, I can't see it now. I'll just pull up the curtain, and then I shall get a better view of the case. (*pulls up curtain, sees Lamotte.*) The devil! Who would have thought this could have turned out ill?

Lamotte. Ha, ha!—vive la bagatelle. Don't you see de joke?

Swipes. No, I can't see the joke, though I have let in the light.

Lit. Mr. Lamotte, you are a pretty fellow.

Lamotte. Oui, Monsieur, ainsi dirent les dames.

Swipes. You——

Enter MRS. SWIPES.

Mrs. Swipes. Simon, my dear love. (*sees* LAMOTTE) Ruined, as I live.

Swipes. Yes ma'am, but you shan't ruin me. There's the door, ma'am. Get out of my house, and if you starve, I shall rejoice to hear it, it serves such a wretch right.

Mrs. Swipes. Wretch! Simon, have a care how you provoke me.

Lit. Mr. Lamotte, I desire you will leave this house. (*to Swipes*) You hardly can understand what my feelings are at this moment.

Lam. I go, very suite, Je suis; I am too well bred to intrude my compagnie when it shall not be desired. [*Exit.*

Lit. Contemptible puppy; how readily he sneaks out of the discord he has himself created.

Mrs. Swipes. (*walking about in a passion*) Wretch indeed. And before that nice young man too.

Swipes. I don't know what I am about; but this picture—how, Sir, did you come by this picture ——

Mrs. Swipes. A wretch—umph.

Lit. I took it with me when I left your house. I—I—am the son you lost, and who lives to prove that however boyish petulance might have estranged him from his natural protector, nature will have her way. My first object will be to reconcile you to your wife.

Mrs. Swipes. To me, young Gentleman, to me; a wretch—no, no; now comes my turn—I gave him fair warning before, sir; if you really are the boy who ran away from him, you are not his son.

Swipes. Devil—devil, what are you going to say?

Lit. Away—away, speak, I conjure you!

Mrs. Swipes. I say if you are that boy, you are the son of Sir Christopher Cranberry; the booby he has palmed upon the Governor is his own child.

Lit. Let me hear you say so. Is this true?

Swipes. Don't be too angry, I thought you dead. Fool that I was to trust her.

Lit. I can brook no delay; with me every thing depends upon this event. Come with me to Sir Christopher's.

Swipes. I dare not go yet; I have below some papers which (since denial is useless) will fully satisfy all parties; I'll give to them you, and follow you directly.

Lit. What a revolution of feelings in a few moments. I am half mad with joy, and so delighted with the event, that I could find it in my heart to forgive this rogue for old acquaintance sake.

Mrs. Swipes. And if you can, my young gen-

tleman, I cannot—so I'll be of the party, my fine fellow.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE LAST.—*At the Hotel.*

Enter SAM, *Sir* LENNOX, *Lady* CRANBERRY, *and* CHARLOTTE.

Sir Lennox. Well, ladies, your lost sheep is found. The hero, Littleworth, is returned, and is closeted with Sir Christopher.

Sam. Yes; and I heard father say he'd send for Fred's father.

Lady Cran. What, is the Captain's father arrived?

Sam. No; old Swipes isn't come yet.

Charlotte. Who?

Sam. Why, La bless you, don't you know?—Littleworth is not his real name. Some sea chap made him a present on it—his real name is Swipes.

Charlotte. Good heavens!

Lady Cran. What an odious name!

Sir Lennox. "A rose by any other name is just as sweet." You'll forgive my being figurative.

Charlotte. But are you sure of this, Mr. Cranberry?

Sam. Cock——

Charlotte. Sir!

Sam. Cock sure, Miss.

Sir Lennox. Who did you hear it from?

Sam. One as ought to know—the young chap himself. He went on like a play actor, and turned up his eyes—somehow so—you know his way; and he says—says he, I'll never set foot in that house never no more.

Charlotte. Yet you say he is returned.

Sam. I seed him with my own precious eyes.

Lady Cran. How strange he never should have mentioned these circumstances.

Sam. I sees nothing strange in it whatsumever. The Pig and Windmill is no such great things to brag of.

Enter Sir CHRISTOPHER *and* LITTLEWORTH.

Sir C. Ugh!—where are you?—wife—Charlotte!—Get out of the way.

(*almost knocks* SAM *down.*)

Sam. I say—what *are* you at?

Sir C. Here—here—thank Heaven—this is my son—my own—my own child. Charlotte, don't speak—there—there!

Sam. (*every body* SAM *speaks to through this Scene, turns away to somebody else*)—But I say though.

Charlotte. Is this possible?

Sir C. Incontestibly proved.

Lit. Beyond all doubt.

Sam. (*to Sir C.*) But I say——

Sir C. (*turns to Lady C.*) Now, Lady Cranberry, I can present you with a son-in-law that I am not ashamed of.

Lady C. And I receive him to my heart with unfeigned pleasure.

Sam. (*to Sir* LEN.) But I say——

Sir Lennox. (*turning to* LIT.) And I, my dear fellow, wish you all the happiness your good qualities deserve.

Sir C. I have sent for the villain who has deceived me.

Enter LAMOTTE.

Lam. The aubergiste, landlord of the Windmill and Hog, has ran away, Sir Christopher.

Sir C. Ugh!

Sam. (*to* LAM.) But I say!

Lam. (*turns to Sir C.*) Is there some more ting to do, Chevalier?

Sir C. Yes, Mr. Lamotte—I have a good deal to say to you, Sir.

Sam. So have I to all of you—but the devil a one of you will listen to me.

Lit. My poor fellow, I will for one.

Sam. (*to Sir C.*) But I say, if you are not my father, and my father has run away, who'll father me?

Sir C. I will: you are an innocent accomplice—and my disgust is turned to pity.

Sam. Well, I'm sure, that's vastly civil, however.

Sir C. I'll take care you shall be placed beyond the mischievous influence of your father's misconduct, and mother-in-law's folly.

Sam. And marry Polly Watts?

Sir C. Yes, and marry Polly Watts. And now, Mr. Lamotte, I have heard of your tricks from my son, and I am sorry to say, a heavy suspicion attaches itself to you; you remember the ring you sold me to-day.

Lam. Oui, Monsieur parfaitement bien.

Sir C. It appears that you sold me that ring for a tenth of its value.

Sir Lennox. Oh, it's all very correct, Sir Christopher—I'll be answerable for his honesty.

Lady Cran. I don't think he would rob.

Sir C. Perhaps not, my dear.

Lam. Besides, Sir Lennox can have no objection now de ring is not for milady.

Sir Lennox. Hold your tongue.

Lam. No; but if I hold my tongue, perhaps, I shall dingle dangle on de tree. Sir Lennox give me de four hundred, and you de fifty.

Sir C. Eh?

Lady C. Oh, Sir Christopher, it is all my fault; I alone am to blame. I borrowed the money of Sir Lennox, and feared to let you know it.

Sir C. Ugh! that's it; well, to-day I forgive it. I presume you, Sir Lennox, are too skilful a broker to advance capital without the expectation of interest.

Sir Lennox. As to the interest, or the principal, we'll say nothing about it: the truth lies in a nutshell; your Lady's pin-money ran short, and I volunteered banker.

Sam. What a pleasant chap for an acquaintance.

Charlotte. You mustn't blame her Ladyship.

Sir C. I don't; I neither blame her artlessness, nor your adroitness, Sir. I'm too happy to be angry; my child has been exchanged—and there's no robbery, for he has found his father at last. Your jewel has exchanged owners, and there's no robbery in that: all I can say is, that I hope the event will prove a double lesson—First, that it will instruct you, Eliza, that to a wife who has confidence in her husband the surest way to the obtainment of her wishes, is the candid avowal of them; and, secondly, Sir Lennox, that it may induce you the next time you present a lady with a DIAMOND RING, to take care she isn't previously provided with a GOLD ONE!

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